

ETON FACES
OLD AND YOUNG

ETON 1885



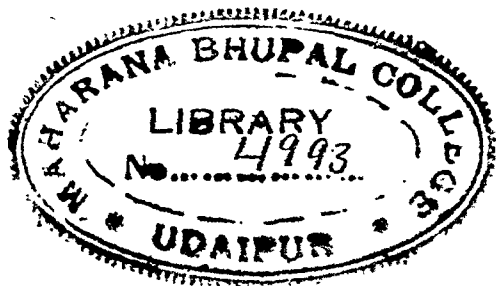
ETON FACES

OLD AND YOUNG

BY

C. A. ALINGTON, D.D.

HEAD MASTER OF ETON



LONDON

IN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

To
M. R. J.

*O highest of Eton officials !
O student and scholar and sage !
I steal your auspicious initials
To grace an Etonian page,
For quicquid agunt Etonenses,
Whatever Etonians do,
Though others it often incenses
Finds charity, Provost, from you.*

*Obscure and illegible charters,
Miss Milligan, abbeyes and art,
State criminals, murderers, martyrs
Are dear to your catholic heart;
Courts know your knee breeches and buckles,
The public your flair for a ghost,
But ah ! your inaudible chuckles
Appeal to your intimates most !*

*In speech you can skilfully season
With salt any butter you spread:
Your reading surpasses all reason:
Your writing can rarely be read:
From cheap and ephemeral fiction
You learn (it appears) to compose
In fine and appropriate diction
A stately liturgical prose.*

*From Handel or Daniel or Dickens
You turn to piquet and a pipe,
Or hatch intellectual chickens
Of ev'ry conceivable type,*

On faintly red to red
The back of the Porcupine,
Red, White, Grey, Brown and Black,
Goldfish and Wren and Wren

From blue and from similar colors
If ever a woman be free,
Yes, even to his very neighbor,
And not in particular—
Then must he make her his
To offer of her love—
A love which can only be
Some Heart-Magician's love.

PREFACE

A CONSIDERABLE proportion of these verses was published in a volume called *Eton Lyrics* (Ingleby) some years ago, and is reproduced by the kind permission of the publisher. The author has again to thank Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., for leave to reprint here some songs from the four volumes of *Fables* which they have published, or are publishing, for him, and also Messrs. Basil Blackwell, Ltd., for leave to include a poem from *Cautionary Catches*.

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OLD ETON FACES

Alter Erit Tum . . . Argos

(Sandy, the property of Mr. Marten, died just before his master's return from the circumnavigation of the globe.)

COME, dogs and puppies everywhere,
Croph, and Moph, Jock and Jack,
Come, Henrietta, tear your hair
Or dye yourself a deeper black :
Howl, howl with elevated head
And weep with me for Sandy dead !

Come, Hist'ry Specialists, where'er
You pluck to-day the lotus flower,
Mourn him who 'neath the wicker chair
Has oft beguiled the dreaming hour :
Clio herself those haunts has fled
And weeps to tell that Sandy's dead !

Odysseus turning home again
From men a bitter welcome found,
But he they scorned and would have slain
Was greeted by his faithful hound :
Our new Odysseus finds instead
We welcome him—but Sandy's dead !

He knew the mouse's secret hole,
He knew (but scorned) the art to beg ;
Whene'er his lord essayed to bowl,
He knew his place—a longish leg:
O head that bowled, O hand that fed,
We weep with you for Sandy dead !

Nay, mourn him not in words alone !
Here, where he passed his mighty youth,
We'll grave in sempiternal stone
With some indifference to truth,
Yet not without an honest pride,
“ Here Sandy lived, and loved and died !”

H. B.

April 1st, 1919

GOOD-BYE, Mr. Broadbent ! to tell you my mind
You will not leave a wiser or kinder behind:
In learning a Porson, in morals a Cato,
As expert in the Times as judicious on Plato;
There is nothing too weighty and nothing too small
To escape your attention: you follow them all:
From Births, Marriages, Deaths to professional sprints
You read all the reports and mark all the misprints,
For (as Terence remarked) there is nothing men do
Which is rightly regarded as alien to you,
And the paper which printed " Andrea del Sato "
Has been justly described as a (*Broad-*) *ben trovato*.

But although you've your eye on the popular press,
Our local proceedings attract you no less;
No Eton performance is ever complete
If you're not to be found in a prominent seat:
The singer, the preacher, the scholar, the poet
Never make a mistake but they know that you know it:
No fives-player misses an obvious stroke,
No piquet-player ventures the mildest revoke,

Not a teller of stories can venture to fake,
No corrector of verses can pass a mistake,
But we feel that your eye will unfailingly mark us
And we shrink from the lash of our own Aristarchus.

But while as a critic you're mending our ways
There is no one so ready with generous praise;
If we trust you to blame us, we trust you no less
To congratulate each on his smallest success,
And although you're a man to whom flattery's hateful
You can hardly object to be told that we're grateful.

So now you are leaving: yet none of us fear
That the link will be cut which united us here;
As we know that quite recently, boredom to banish,
You sent for a grammar and taught yourself Spanish,
So you still will be learning while others forget,
And your kindness and wisdom will live with us yet,
And we call it a parting, but never an end,
Most friendly of critics, most critical friend !

A. C. A.

October 26th, 1919.

WHEN, in his words, on Founder's Day you raise
Your song of duteous praise,
And your thanksgiving bring
To Henry, Founder, King,
Remember him whose debt of thanks is paid,
Here in His courts at last securely laid.

When in your concert hall again is heard
The Vale's parting word
Of Eton's scenes, and all
That those dear names recall,
Remember him whose wish was but to be,
Dear Mother Eton, ever near to thee.

And when from far old friends together brought
Join in the prayer he taught
That, come whatever will,
Eton may flourish still,
Remember him whose every moment proved
His dedication to the School he loved.

R. P. L. B.

July 22nd, 1920.

DEAR R.P.L.B., you'll forgive when you see
This brief valedictory letter,
For I think I've been told you consistently hold
That the shorter is often the better.

When we fought side by side, I remember with pride
That I named with prophetic decision
As a General YOU, and the dream has come true
When you rule in a Gen'ral Division.

In the records of Rome you're uniquely at home
From Romulus, Remus and Numa;
On its roads and its walls there impartially falls
The light of your learning and humour.

But you pilfer at will from the classical till
Mixed treasures of fancy sardonic,
For your methods Socratic are genuine Attic,
And your jests are the purest Laconic.

Though no one denies anthropometrist's eyes
May reckon the rabble above you,
This at least is your own, that where'er you are known
They are equally certain to love you !

H. M.

July 22nd, 1920.

VICE PROVOST designate ! or (will you blame,
Although we oughtn'

To use again the nobler, nearer name ?)

Dear Hugh Macnaghten,
Suffer us once, ere the unfeeling moss

Grows on our grieving,
To tell you how unspeakable the loss
To those you're leaving.

For who like you can make dead poets speak

Across the ages
And teach there is no living tongue but Greek
For Saints and Sages ?

Who'll read with your inimitable zest

Sohrab and Thyrsis,
And make the dullest long to do his best
At Latin Verses ?

But who can doubt, unless the touch of Time
Your ardour mellows,

You will have much of sentiment sublime
To teach the Fellows ?

That noble thoughts indifferently are found
In Courts and garrets:
That Postum is what keeps the body sound—
Combined with carrots:

That sleep is sweetest when most simply sought,
Beneath the heaven,
That only sluggards wish (and no one ought)
To rise at seven.
At each Committee those unpunctual peers
Who sit upon it
Will be constrained with penitential tears
To write a sonnet;
And our wise Provost in particular,
Whose taste so nice is,
Will own, however great his Virtues are,
No less his Vice's.

So Grief and Gratitude, our loss and gain,
Together meeting,
Ave and *Vale* or, in words more plain,
Farewell and Greeting !

R. S. de H.

December 16th, 1920.

CALLIOPE, Melpomene, assist me to unravel and
Establish beyond any possibility of cavil and
Proclaim to all the universe the virtues of de Havilland !

Hail, oarsman irreproachable, observed of all Oxonians !
Hail, pedagogue in embryo, admired of Wellingtonians !
But everywhere and always an Etonian of Etonians.

What wet-bob of distinction ever failed to be aware of his
Emphatic disapproval and receive an ample share of his
Abuse ? And oh ! his silence and that concentrated glare
of his !

And yet each weary after 6 they went to meet their fate
again,
And even as they heard him say, ' You ghastly fool, you're
late again,'
They vowed they'd do their best for him to win the Ladies'
Plate again.

For who that really know the man can doubt the kindly
heart of him

That never failing courtesy which seems a very part of him
(Unless a rash antagonist at Henley got the start of him) ?

In Mathematics, History, Geography, Divinity,
His eloquence illuminates Queen's Schools and their
vicinity—

And who would throw a doubt upon his soundness in
Latinity ?

To hear him teach the Army Class *je sais, il sait, vous
savez*, was,

If not a revelation of what working like a navvy was,
An intimate reminder of how versatile our Havvy was.

Each member of the O.E.A.—the very old and fusty 'uns,
And later generations—e'en the rather young and lusty
'uns,

Will hail his secretarial establishment at Mustians.

And whether it's in Mustians or quite another latitude
You seek the sweet repose of matrimonial beatitude,
You'll carry with you (won't you ?) the assurance of our
gratitude.

J. H. M. H.

December 16th, 1920.

(Air: "How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!")

HOW pleasant to know Mr. Hare,
Who has taught the Third Formers so long !
His merits at length to declare
Would strain the resources of song.

Small sinners of every variety
His constant attention employ,
He is loved by the Eton Society,
He is loved by the last Lower Boy.

When he fields in his Harlequin cap,
The trees in the Triangle know
What a quite ineffaceable gap
He would leave if he happened to go.

His writing is rather untidy,
His pencil may happen to stray
A little bit *downy-up-sidey*,
But that's his peculiar way.

When he walks from his house into school,
 Surrounded by groups of the small,
Why, even the shallowest fool
 Can see he's a friend to them all.

No metre (they know) could support an
 Account of his kindness and care;
Ere, then, he departs for Colenorton,
 How pleasant to know Mr. Hare !

A Birthday Letter

March, 1921.

DEAR Prince Henry,
March is ending, and you'll soon be twenty-one,
So, congratulations sending,
Eton greets her son :

Knowing well that you'll remember many things you've
learnt to know,
Since that morning in September
Several years ago.

You'll remember first arriving, lonely, shy, a little sad,
Till you found with hope reviving,
Things were not so bad:

You'll recall, with some elation, how you qualified to pass
More than one examination
(Thanks to Army Class):

Every type of simple fraction soon was possible to you—
But we hail with satisfaction
Things you *cannot* do:

Cannot cross the ancient river Thames, and not remember
how

You were forced to sit and shiver
While you learnt to row ;

Cannot, when in Eton High Street, thronged with boys of
each degree,

Fail to murmur, " Ah, that's *my* street,
As it used to be."

So the academic hen regards you as her faithful son

While she clucks " Good luck, Prince Henry,
Now you're twenty-one !"

H. E. L.

On his eightieth birthday.

Feb. 28th, 1921.

O BEE of Hybla ! (or whatever bee
On Grecian mountain or in Sicily
Of honey sucks more)

With thy poetic sweetness touch my tongue
And aid me to indite a little song

To Mr. Luxmoore !

O execrable and unworthy rhyme !

He will despise it. Yet for this one time

Let it pass muster;

While Eton with a loving reverence greets

The memorable day when he completes

His sixteenth lustre.

With us, who breathe a less ennobling air,

The heart each year grows harder, and the hair

A trifle thinner:

With him each season only seems to find

The head more noble and the heart more kind

To each poor sinner.

What is his secret ? Ask disciples whom

He taught so many years in pupil room,

Skilled to impart a

Delight in all that Athens has to give,
 Though choosing for himself the life they live
 In simple Sparta.

And they will answer that he did not spare
 Himself or others: that his praise was rare,
 And so more weighty:
 That love of all that's good in life or art,
 In boy or man, has kept him young in heart
 To-day at eighty.

What is his secret? Ask his flowers to tell
 And they will answer, for they know him well,
 "Here in a garden
 No envy, no uncharitable strife
 Mars the smooth tenor of the labouring life,
 Though hands may harden."

The relaxations lesser mortals take—
 Our cheap excuses—for his Eton's sake
 He has forgone them:
 And justice, beauty—whatsoever, in short,
 Is honest, lovely, and of good report—
 Has thought upon them.

So, as I pass that hospitable gate,
 The property, as you delight to state,
Et amicorum,
 I often murmur, as I think of you,
 Verse 2 (the latter half) Psalm xxxii,
Beati quorum.

C. M. W.

March, 1922.

DEAR Wells, as March the 21st
Renews its celebrations,
New thoughts of pride in secret nursed
Tinge my congratulations.

Do not suppose that I have not
Legitimately prided
Myself on having shared my lot
With one so many-sided !

But still the fact that gives to-day
A meaning of its own, is
That you've endured, like Seneca,
Quinquennium Neronis.

Circles to square let others try,
They move a world's derision—
We sit triumphant, you and I,
Dividing a Division.

I think that in this sum of ours
No friction follows fraction;
My answer (and I hope it's yours)
Is Simple Satisfaction.

W. S. F. E.

May 11th, 1922.

WE saw the vans arriving, we saw the luggage
packed,
We saw the curtain falling on the fatal final act,
Far off farewells were sounding, and soft but very plain
We heard the breeze a-singing as it rustled down Keate's
Lane.

"I came along the river, I came by Brocas Clump,
I swept by Upper Sixpenny to Jordan's famous jump,
I whispered to the trees that guard our blessed Eton well,
And trees and Field and river gave the message that I tell.

"Their memories are longer than the little days of men,
They keep the great traditions safe, they tell old tales again,
And now they mourn the passing of a famous Eton name
And wake the blessed memory of Eton's greatest Dame.

"They hold in high remembrance still the brilliant shirts
of red,
The many triumphs of the Field, the heroes gone and dead,
Fremantle, Gibbs, and Lyttelton, the host of noble names,
The Coleridges and Selwyns and the glory of m'Dame's.

“ Their fame’s on many a house-board, their fame’s on
Eton walls,
Their bones on every battlefield where England’s honour
calls,
But most their spirits haunt the Lane where, for a
hundred years,
The name and fame of ‘ Evanses ’ have thrilled in Eton ears.

“ Now, when of that thrice-honoured line the last, and
not the least,
Lays down his heritage of fame, safe-guarded and increased,
Those whom he led from things he loved to thoughts more
lovely yet
And trees and Field and river whisper ‘ *We* shall not
forget.’ ”

T. F. C.

November, 1922.

HOW kind of Fate to bring a date
So easy to remember !
Who does not know how much we owe
To Kalends of November ?

Of all the saints my fancy paints
(Don't contradict me flatly)

I know of few to rank with you,
Dear Mr. Thomas Cattley.

Though bunkers throng the course along,
And putts may run the green o'er,
No man can show so calm, or so
Unruffled a demeanour.

Though floors may fall, and ill-built wall
Grow foul and damp and muddy,
No trial yet has e'er upset
The owner of the study.

Long live the type of humour ripe
Whereof you're sole creator !

Long may Remove their teacher love !

MAGISTER INFORMATOR.

A. A. S., M.P.

November 23rd, 1922.

“**I**F Winter comes,” then Summer will: and yet, when
Mr. Somerville
Abandons us for Parliament, he leaves a blank behind;
The students of the Army Class must now into the Army
pass
Without the valued stimulus of his directing mind.

Their infantile precocities will teach them what a loss it is
When you, sir, have departed in the Parliament’ry
train,
But ev’ry good constituent on whose behalf to sit you went
Will confidently tell them that their loss is Windsor’s
gain.

Insinuating Irishman ! you add, as only Irish can,
A zest to ev’ry incident, a spice to ev’ry mess,
The magic of your blarney charms (as Patti or Albani
charms)
Policeman, pupils, parents, politicians and the Press.

They soon will know in Parliament what George Augustus
Sala meant

By saying that reporters love to listen to a brogue,
They soon will see at Westminster the gallery of Pressmen
stir

With wonder at the speeches of a *quondam* pedagogue.

Unceasingly in politics the clock of human folly ticks,
Reiterating endlessly, "Spend less and give us more,"
"Respect the rich man's capital, but mind you keep the
happy tal-
low candle brightly burning in the cottage of the poor."

Remember, Bonar-Lavian, we need a bigger Navy, an
Improvement in the weather (which is daily getting
worse),

Remember the electorate with confidence expect a rate
Of Government expenditure proportioned to our purse !

Remember how the nation all insists on educational
Facilities for everyone, but doesn't want to pay;
We want to hold the Bosphorus, without a penny's loss
for us,
We want Constantinople, but we want to come away !

What though the proletariat shake horny fists and hairy at
The nation's commissariat ? What though the heathen
rage ?

O local politician ! prove yourself a wise physician
And by remedies Patrician heal the sorrows of the age !

E. W. S.

July 26th, 1923.

THAT old apostle, who on Patmos shore
Scaled up the last word of his prophecy
Till that great day when Time should be no more,
Was carried to a mountain great and high,
And saw descend before his wondering eye
That city whereon God's own glory shone,
That heavenly city which foursquare did lie,
Whose streets were paved with purest gold alone
And its foundations all adorned with precious stone.

With dazzling eyes we read that glorious list
Whose rays resplendent flash with every hue,
With topaz, emerald and amethyst,
With green chrysoprasus and sapphire blue,
And, as their varied radiance we view,
We know that wall, raised by no human hands,
Well built on stones so precious and so true,
For ever on a sure foundation stands,
While other cities fall, loose built on shifting sands.

But oh! forget not, as these words you read,
That all these things in parable are done,
And, as thereon you marvel, take good heed,
To learn the lesson that by them is shown;
For all our gifts are but as precious stone,
That we with them foundations true may lay
Of walls that shall endure when we are gone,
And firmly fashioned shall outlive our day—
God's own great city walls that shall not pass away.

Then happy he who from his earliest youth
Has learnt the noble lesson of his name,
And lived in love, and loyalty and truth,
Content to give, nor curious to claim
These small rewards that lesser men call Fame;
Happy those friends that such a friend have known
In most unselfish service still the same;
And thou thrice happy, Eton, that mayst own
Thy sure foundations built on such a precious stone !

J. H. M. H.

December 19th, 1923.

(Tune—"Robin Adair.")

WHAT means Third Form to me ?
Just Mr. Hare !
Where will its glories be
When he's not there ?
Where all that happy noise ?
Where all those inky boys ?
O they are fled with thee,
Kind Mr. Hare !

Who is't whose every note
Fills with despair
All those to whom he wrote ?
Kind Mr. Hare !
Yet can our friendship's eyes
Pierce through their thick disguise—
And who is not a friend
To Mr. Hare ?

Note how each famous man
Hastes to declare
How life for him began
With Mr. Hare !
Why does he rule the land ?
How rise to high command ?
Because he learnt it from
Wise Mr. Hare !

Wherever two or three
Such gathered are,
Whate'er their calling be,
Church, Army, Bar,
Bishop to Judge will cry,
Field-Marshal make reply,
" All that we are we owe
To Mr. Hare !"

Take then, before you go,
Kind Mr. Hare !
One phrase for all we owe,
One little prayer;
No time can ever send
Small boys so true a friend:
Long life and happiness
To Mr. Hare !

L. S. R. B.

July 24th, 1924.

DEAR Mr. Editor, this Half (or what
Americans would call the summer session)
Has been throughout distinguished, has it not ?

By something of a feeling of depression:
What brought this blight on the devoted spot

I failed to guess (forgive the frank confession):
How could I know what secret cause was grieving us
Until I learnt that Mr. Byrne was leaving us ?

For we were nursed upon the selfsame hill

(Though hills are hardly plentiful at Trinity),
Fed the same flock (with far from equal skill),

I on the arid deserts of Latinity,
While his could gambol by each German rill:

I've said enough to indicate affinity,
Though not, I trust, to cause you to dismiss it as
A mere perversion of some lines in Lycidas.

I can imagine (though I'm no mechanic)

How motors feel without their guiding gear,
Or what a toper feels when some organic

Constituent is lacking in his beer;

I can in fancy share the sailor's panic

Who's lost his compass and is told to steer—
Such images suggest in figure dim
What Eton loses when it loses him.

Mourn, Language specialists ! Mourn, house of Wotton,
Whose laurels (greener from the brows of Vaughan)
Some lower forehead must at length be put on,
Some lesser mortal must at length adorn;
Mourn, wetbobs, mourn, for sure no saner foot on
Your Thames's towpath has for years been borne—
Mourn, both Divisions of the Junior Fours—
Mourn, more than all, Committee of School Stores !

School Stores ! the very words are as a knell
To toll the thought of what we lose in you,
Encyclopædic enterprise ! so well
Epitomizing all the work you do,
For this, and much that space forbids to tell,
Thanks, Mr. Byrne ! for this is wholly true :
When you are gone 'twere hard indeed to find
A man so competent and yet so kind !

H. B.R. and A. M. G.

December 17th, 1924.

(A lost fragment from Absalom and Achitophel: the earlier lines, dealing faithfully with the imbecilities of David's reign, are here omitted.)

THUS David ruled, and as he ruled he writ—
Prose without grace and poems without wit:
Beneath in place, in worth far over him,
Stood the wise leaders of the Sanhedrim,
Wise one and all, but wisest they that rule
Sons of the prophets in their premier school.

Still young in mind, though of experience ripe,
Stood Achbehar, their leader and their type,
A teacher crowned with honour and with years,
Whose every pupil learns and loves and fears.
Fourth Form he ruled, a cheery, feckless clan,
Who thought that all was verse that seemed to scan;
Scholar and humorist, whose weighty sense
Flows forth in an incisive eloquence:

Feared by all fools, a lion in the path
Of idle Philistines fresh come from Gath,
Who, generously eager to discern
Some symptom of anxiety to learn,
Greets ev'ry well-meant effort with applause,
Constrains his roaring and contracts his paws.
Like Jacob halting on a wounded limb,
In all things else he least resembled him,
Impulsive, honest, hospitable, brave,
Gay without malice, without unction grave.
The prophets' sons, by such example led,
To learning and to loyalty were bred,
And young and old unite with one acclaim
To praise their tutor and prolong his fame.

Next, but unique in versatility,
Stands that bewildering figure Aemgi,
Framed to disprove the poet's idle rule
"Ne'er was musician yet but was a fool,"
As skilled to guide sweet music's dying fall
As organise mere murder at the Wall:
Fierce in the bully, foremost in the ram,
On every football field a mighty name,
Splashing with accents each beginner's prose,
While to write verse with him is to transpose:
Born insubordinate, in youth he had
Turned rebel and run popularly mad:
But donned the gown in sign of penitence
And waged a truceless war with common sense,

Maintaining daily to the astounded throng
That what is probable is clearly wrong:
Yet, undisdainful of their duller ears,
He turns to tune the harmonies he hears,
And robs his age of richly-earned repose,
Giving to Counterpoint what's meant for Prose:
No less ingenious mind can sing of thee,
Distracting, dauntless, generous Aemgi !

* * * *

Alas ! poor David ! must thou see them go
And lose two such companions at a blow,
While they, withdrawn, at thy hard labour smile
And safe enjoy the Sabbath of their toil ?
Know thou at least (and here the extract ends)
Ne'er had less worthy king such faithful friends !

F. E. R.

April, 1925.

(Being a lost passage from the Prologue to the "Canterbury Tales.")

A SCHOLEMAISTER, in the liverie
Of a solempne and great fraternitee,
There was also, that highte Robesoun,
That strong and stout was as a champioun,
And therewithal he jolif was and gay
By reason of his rede *colera*,¹
(For Galien² saith that he that ruddy is
Go where him list he shall not do amiss).
He had a band that jazzden in his house,
For though there nas no man so vertuous
Yet loved he ful wel a seemly jape.³
He was so wise that he coulde shape
In Dutch, in Frensh or Latin his sentence,⁴
And thus was holden digne of reverence.
A blue he was of Oxenford also
That lasfe nat⁵ to teach the young to row.

¹ choler.

² Galen, the physician.

³ jest.

⁴ meaning.

⁵ ceased not.

A trewe swinker¹ and a good was he
 And in his own gardin at Tewkesburie
 If he bade plant and thereto dyke and delve²
 Yet mighte none dyke harder than him selve.
 Thus wroghte he painfully full many an houre:
 But if that wrecche³ sect that hight Laboure
 (I mene Jakke Jones and his meynee)⁴
 Would cursen wealth and superfluitee
 Then would he ragen like a wode⁵ leoun
 And gader folk and make oracioun,⁶
 " Certes, the wise poet sayeth thus,
Ibis in medio tutissimus,
 Therefor that governour nis but an ass
 That dooth not hooly⁷ trust the middle class."
 But sikerly⁸ he was of such humblesse,
 Of such discrecioun and hardinesse,
 So trewe withal and of so kind a heart
 That when the time was come that he must part
 All that fair companye for many a day
 Wexen ful sad. Ther nis namore to say.

¹ labourer.² make ditches.³ wretched.⁴ followers.⁵ mad.⁶ preside at a meeting of the Middle Classes Union.⁷ wholly.⁸ truly.

C. H. B.

July 16th, 1925.

(Air: "The Heavy Dragoon.")

PARTING from one of your great personalities,
Now the Head Master of Lancing elect,
Eton, expound his remarkable qualities,
Leave it to Lancing to find a defect !
Questions in general, questions particular,
Try him with any you care to propose,
And he will answer so clear and so quick you'll agree
what a lot Mr. Blakiston knows.
Learned discussions on classic topography,
Topical talks upon modern geography,
Cyprus and civics, cathedrals and coal,
Drink, Deuteronomy, dates or the dole—
Yes, yes, yes, yes,
Take any theme you can call educational,
Purely parochial, cosmic or national,
Think of a man who can tackle the lot—
That's the Head Master that Lancing has got !

Where can a master be found to supply a like
Stream of omniscience, coloured or plain ?
Who will teach specialists, and Obadiah-like
Feed them by fifties with food for the brain ?
Who hasn't heard him deciphering cuneiform,
Spelling it out to a visiting throng ?
Who hasn't seen the Mess President's uniform,
Quaintly capacious, as broad as it's long ?
Virtuous causes of every variety,
Pupils of every degree of propriety,
Brains that are brilliant, brains that are dim,
Know what a friend they are losing in him;
Yes, yes, yes, yes,
Think of a master who's kindness personified,
Think of a scholar completely un-donified,
Giving himself without counting the cost—
That is the Blakiston Eton has lost !

A. S. F. G.

July 23rd, 1925.

A TROPOS !
Why inflict this second loss ?
Fancy taking Mr. Gow
now !

He who thinks
To confound our Eton Sphinx
Might as well be bowling Hobbs
lolæ.

He who tries
His composure to surprise
Might as fitly challenge Len-
glen.

Trin. Coll. Camb.
Now recalls its wandering lamb,
Bidding Eton Scholarship
rip.

So he goes,
Leaving (as we hope he knows)
Very many friends and no
foc.

B. J.

September, 1925.

DEAR Mr. Johnson, though I fear that we
Are not as musical as you would have us,
Eton is grateful, as it well may be,
For all you gave us.

Precentors pass: yet here for many days
The Chapel services will sing your praise.

We are not very docile: but we hope
That after years of labour you can see an
Approximation to the nobler scope
Of things Rugbeian:
We may be ignorant: but this we know,
How much we shall be losing when you go.

Should others rule us with severer rods
And play jazz music on your precious organ,
And goad to fury Messrs. Lee and Dodds,
Barrand and Morgan,
To your successors we shall simply say,
Be kind, be clever, and, in short, B. J. !

A. B. R.

ECHO, I wish to test your knowledge
Of all that's best in Eton College;
But I can only make suggestions,
And you must answer all my questions:
Are you prepared for your exam ? say !

Echo (cheerfully): *xamjay ?*

Who rules the lower boys of Eton,
And has them praised, promoted, beaten,
With power like great Tartary's Cham ? say !

Echo (doubtfully): *Chamjay ?*

Who celebrates the praise of Latin
In verse as brightly smooth as satin
Or as his own beloved Cam ? say !

Echo (brightly): *Camjay ?*

Who holds that, matched with other studies,
The classics are as mind to mud is
Or Japhet to his brother Ham ? say !

Echo (hopefully): *Hamsay ?*

Who, both in spirit and in letter
 Can educate his pupils better
 Than tutors who can merely cram ? say !

Echo (confidently): *cramsay ?*

Who watches over all he teaches
 As gardeners o'er priceless peaches
 Or nurses o'er their precious pram ? say !

Echo (desperately): *pramsay ?*

Whose genius never fails to grapple
 With every need of Lower Chapel,
 And wheedles money out of Pam ? say !

Echo (wearily): *Pamsay ?*

Who organises scouting *so* well
 He earns the praise of Baden-Powell
 And wolfcubs frisk like little lambs ? say !

Echo (gloomily): *lambsay ?*

Whose gentle voice reproves my errors
 Yet robs rebuke of all its terrors,
 Revealing me the fool I am ? say !

Echo (sulkily): *amsay ?*

Come, Echo, you aren't really trying !
 I wish you'd think before replying:
 The names you give are simply silly,
 I'll make you answer, willy-nilly,
 Are you alluding to the Ram ? say !

Echo (triumphantly): **RAMSAY !**

A. B. R.

1925

WHY has a Muse dejected this horrible metre
selected,

Striving to let you know all we shall lose if you go?

Surely, my dear Lower Master, to show that an Eton
disaster,

Fraught with results immense, shatters the metrical
sense.

As we gloomily ponder, our thoughts irrepressibly wander,

Picturing year by year all you have done for us here:

How you have dared to grapple with every problem of
Chapel,

Asking of Lower Boys more than a primitive noise,

Till, your faith rewarded, it stands for ever recorded,

How courageously you dreamt of a dream that was true.

Many a scandal ended, and all good causes defended,

Many a lost field won tell of the work you have done,

Saving from dry inanition the flower of Eton tradition,

Pruning with anxious knife weeds that would threaten
its life;

All the toil of learning with infinite diligence turning
Into a labour of love even for boys in Remove,
Still the infant curses at hard intractable verses,
Till in the bleak schoolroom classical lilies can bloom,
Till boys answer you pat in approved Ciceronian Latin,
While their parents compose passable copies of prose.
Till in each generation, with endless Ramification,
Pupils steadily see what you would have them to be.

Pyrrha with one attendant (Aquarius in the ascendant)
Brought from the stones of earth new generations to
birth,
Ram, *our* constellation, presides at a newer creation,
While from the earth there sprouts, sudden, an army of
Scouts:
Scouts who saw you reigning successfully over their
training,
Saw you defying damp, sharing the hardships of camp,
Saw you once, unbending, from Corfe's steep castle
descending,
Torn 'twixt fear and hope, slithering over the slope.
Thus broods sad recollection, but still from depth of
dejection
We salute with respect Magdalene's Master elect,
We, for whom you have striven, who give, for all you have
given,
Love and praise and regret, friend we shall never forget!

To Mr. Wells

ON HIS COMPLETING HIS FIFTY-FIFTH YEAR

(*Twenty years—at least—after Samuel Johnson.*)

March 26th.

VERY, very much alive
Wells has come to fifty-five;
Time, whose stiff disabling gyve
Binds our wrists at fifty-five,
Time, who bids "the anhelings give"
Puff and pant at fifty-five,
Leaves him free to cut and drive,
Finely field at fifty-five,
And as bowler still contrive
Booby traps at fifty-five.
Memories from their honied hive
Flutter forth at fifty-five.
Why should Fate asunder rive
Links that last till fifty-five,
And *Division I* deprive
Of his acre at fifty-five
Leaving (in the ablative ?)
Those he taught till fifty-five ?

Though the years go divie-dive
Steeplly after fifty-five,
Though unwillingness to wive
Haunt him still at fifty-five,
All that singleness can give
May he know at fifty-five,
More and more maturely thrive
In the years past fifty-five,
And serenely see arrive
Sixty-, Seventy-, Eighty-five !

C. M. W.

(After Sir Philip Sidney.)

July, 1926.

DOUBT you to whom my Muse these lines inditeth
Which my poor pen at her persuasion writeth ?
Of Wells, of Wells, each halting stanza tells
Which so much worth unworthily requiteth.

Who bowls the ball which, slowest, fastest breaketh,
And many a wicket of compulsion taketh ?

Of Wells, of Wells, full many a score-book tells,
His fame, his catches, and the runs he maketh.

Whose skill is such that who dared once decry him
As Mike's successor swear not *at* but *by* him ?

Of Wells, of Wells, the inverted anthem tells
Which biddeth Lord's to praise and magnify him.

Who launched the Wide that changed the laws of cricket
By its surprising distance from the wicket ?

Of Wells, of Wells, the irate Oxonian yells,
While subtler Cantabs murmur "That's the ticket" !

Who knoweth where the gum tree goodliest groweth
From whose pure side the richest rubber floweth ?

'Tis Wells, 'tis Wells ! And when he buys and sells
He oft receiveth more than first he oweth.

Who hath the wit whereby the phrase is minted
Wherein, though least is said, yet most is hinted ?

To Wells, to Wells, the shrewd stamp-dealer sells,
Only for him St. Vincent stamps are printed.

Who hath the pen which foul Greek prose refineth ?
Who young divines more certainly divineth ?

Of Wells, of Wells, each Wilder Prizeman tells:
Now, signed by age, he without sign resigneth.

Who hath the art which rules with cunning phrases,
Or hint of eyeglass that he briskly raises ?

'Tis Wells ! 'tis Wells ! Divisions which he quells
Are undivided in their teacher's praises.

Doubt you to whom my Muse these lines inditeth
Which my poor pen at her persuasion writeth ?

Of Wells, of Wells, each halting stanza tells
Which so much worth unworthily requiteth.

Eton's Tears

*(Or a lamentable ballad on the grievous departure of
Matthew Hill and Reymond de Montmorency.)*

GOOD Dr. Warre, in days of yore,
Received a publication
Suggesting that positions flat
Were bad for education.

*Your fields are wide, the critics cried,
But uniformly level ;
Where rivers drain a spacious plain,
Avoid them like the devil !*

*Though fit for tramps, or nomad camps,
Their moving tents to pitch in,
None but a fool would build a school
On banks of Thames or Itchen.*

*At Eton all are pinched and small,
Their chests absurdly narrow,
Because ozone is found alone
On healthy hills like Harrow.*

*It follows hence that men of sense
All future schools will settle
(Or so one hopes) on breezy slopes
Like Popocatepetl.*

Deciding not to change the spot
Which threatened such disasters,
Our worthy Head resolved instead
To get some other masters.

And from that day he used to say,
“ Our critics ! I'll confront 'em;
Say what they will, we have a Hill,
Nec non habemus Montem ! ”

Time as it flies has proved him wise;
The debt that Eton owes them
Appreciates at rapid rates
For everyone that knows them.

Before the one, like learning's sun,
The mists of error vanish;
How polyglot the other's lot,
With German, French and Spanish !

The one can spy heredity
When baby first his bib licks,
The other spots precisely what's
The proper use of niblicks.

One gaily greets cryptogametes
 (If that's what Mendel's word is):
The other's aim is nobler game,
 Accumulating "birdies."

Henceforth, Keate's Lane, you seek in vain
 Such men of *cent per cent* worth:
They're driving now their ball or plough
 At Willoughbridge or Wentworth !

Par optimum sodalium !
 Hocce Decembri mense
Quam piget nos abire vos
 Hill et de Montmorency !

To S. G. L.

ON HIS RESIGNING HIS HOUSE.

December 19th, 1928.

BECAUSE for forty years you have not swerved
From the fair promise of an Eton name,
Self-dedicated to the school you served,
Unfaltering in singleness of aim;
Because by you the things we hold so dear,
Castle and river, bridge and pond and trees,
Are seen transfigured in a light more clear,
The vision which the artist-lover sees.
But most because unerringly you know
The thousand thoughts that fill the mind of boys,
Their moods that with the minutes come and go,
Their small absurdities, their griefs and joys—
Take, one long chapter of your service done,
Your Eton's thanks to a most loyal son.

A Protest

(The Provost's name appears third on the list of the first recipients of the Bibliographical Society's Gold Medals)

March 28th, 1929.

HAIL to our Bibliographical Medallist !
Not that the honour is all that it seems,
Surely our Provost was worthy to head a list
Starting absurdly with Wilberforce Eames ?

Prate not of Haebler, the great incunabulist,
Pollard, McKerrow and similar themes,
Here, if at random you ask any babe you list
What bibliographer Eton esteems,

He will reply, 'tis the man who can track a ray
Glimmering faintly 'mid manuscript reams,
Whom the prophetic novelist Thackeray
Rightly described as infallible Jeames !

Miss Oughterson

July 25th, 1929.

COLLEGERS !
Weep for your sake, not for hers !
Can you bear to let Miss O.
Go ?

Who but she
Knows what boys should have for tea ?
Who but she made College food
Good ?

When the Eight
Holds carouses, loud and late,
Who provides the food they sup
Up ?

She alone
Devils the propitious bone
On which oarsmen such as Clive
Thrive.

One and all,
Sick and healthy, large and small,
Fools and wise, her loving care
Share.

Even those
Who believe the world their foes
Find in her capacious heart
Part.

Does she not
Lighten the poor sinner's lot ?
(Hush ! Whatever will H.K.
Say ?)

Will she rule
Wisely her Canadian school,
Till it learns her name to bless ?
Yes !

Will she find
Friends forget her, left behind,
When she's in Ontario ?
No !

C. H. K. M., the Vice Provost

November 21st, 1929.

HAIL, Clio, Muse of History ! To-day the veil
of mystery

That wrapped the new appointment has officially been
rent,

To-day we hail as Vice Provost a man with knowledge
nice of Ost-

rogoths, and any similar historical event.

To think so very lovable a Lower Master's movable

Evokes in all Etonians a sigh—and then a smile,

To think of one whose character (like Topsy's when they
barracked her)

Displays the high congruity of innocence and guile.

Our Henry's fit analogy we find in Bluff King Hal—a ge-
niality unhampered by unwillingness to kill:

One shows us in the fives-court how the other would his
wives court,

With exquisite ferocity, duplicity, and skill.

On ev'ry theme that's topical, or project philanthropical,

This best of Lower Masters brings unfailingly to bear

A brain that's full of interest, a heart that won't begin to rest,

But claims in ev'ry trouble its most sympathetic share.

None else can frame so fresh a list of options for the
Specialist—

No longer will his colleagues, working far into the night,
With faith and hope and charity decipher the disparity

Twixt what he wants to say to them and what he
seems to write.

Etonian historians, Edwardians, Victorians,

Will hail in Henry Marten the begetter of them all;
While veteran Free Foresters and Lower Chapel Choristers
Escort him in procession to his Vice-Provostial stall.

To M. R. J., O.M.

June 4th, 1930.

EMINENT Men, such as Eton's Præpositi,
Need not a Garter to wear at their knee:
When the Prime Minister (which of them was it ? I
Cannot remember) bestowed a K.G.,
"Bother," (he said), "the rewards that are merited !
Here is an honour that's simply inherited,
Think of the saving of trouble to me !"

Miles Garterii vel Periscelidis,
Yours is an honour not wholly your own:
Tepid the Bath (you might even say gelid) is,
Thistles grow thickly wherever they're sown;
So I prefer, though I'm possibly prejudiced,
Orders in which it may clearly be said you distinguish
a man for his merit alone.

Knights of the Garter ! We grant you are glorious !
Knight of the Bath ! You have somewhere to sing !
Yet to be marked as the Most Meritorious
Scholar in England's a different thing.
Hail, of all Provosts best loved and the learnedest,
Blest with a brain that so amply has earned esteem
from the source of all honour, the King !

*Lines Recited by the Captain of the
School on June 4, 1930*

SIR ! Mr. Provost ! ere your actors tread
Their homely stage of immemorial red,
Permit me, on behalf of those you rule,
To name the latest honour done the School.

Your " merit," Sir, as I need hardly say,
Was known at Eton long ere yesterday.
While books and pipes your study table stacking,
Will greet in " order " the one gift that's lacking;
For now that worth which we so long have known
Has won the *imprimatur* of the Throne:
A Hanoverian sovereign proclaims
His admiration for the name of James,
And, in your merits, so sublimely owned,
The Jacobites behold their wrongs atoned.

'Twould ill become me, sir, in vapid verse
Your scholarly distinctions to rehearse:
Your printed works, now frivolous, now solemn,
Who's Who records in a close-printed column,
Now laying doubts that rack the scholar's breast,
Now raising Ghosts that wreck that scholar's rest.

But we, and all Etonians near and far,
Esteem less what you write than what you are;
We welcome every honour that attends
The best of Provosts and the best of friends,
Full well assured His Majesty's Recorder
Will add new grace to his illustrious Order
When, while the School her Eton poet grieves,
Our Eton scholar fills the place he leaves.

A Quinquerime

Or the Cinque Porters.

July, 1930.

OF T the official bard with trembling tongue
The dear departing's eulogy has sung,
But now (if he may parody a trope
Immortalised by Alexander Pope)¹
He weeps no more for individual woe,
But lisps for numbers, for such numbers go:
How can he find a metre fit for you all,
Ford, Dr. Porter, Bevan, Todd, McDowall ?

Who so equipped to demonstrate to Youth
The endless multiplicity of Truth ?
No scientific doubts their souls appal, ”
Nor the disjunctive pronouns of the Gaul:
They shudder at no mathematic mystery,
Sound in theology, complete in history,
They smile at every doubt in earth and heaven,
Do Ford, McDowall, Porter, Todd and Bevan.

¹ “I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came.”—POPE.

What sights familiar vanish from our ken,
The signs and symbols of five famous men !
The matutinal cycle who shall ride ?
Down Common Lane who now so swiftly stride ?
O scarf enveloping the peccant throat !
O leathern girdle ! And O punted boat !
O punctual presence at the House of God,
O Bevan, Ford, McDowall, Porter, Todd !

By varied means, the carrot or the goad,
They've urged their flocks along the selfsame road:
Ferocious, friendly, mild, magniloquent,
They wield the teacher's every instrument,
The inspired harangue, the exposition terse,
The whispered warning, or the crisper curse—
They know the appropriate (or opprobrious) word,
Do Porter, Todd, McDowall, Bevan, Ford.

Slough's sighs to see her scientist no more
Windsor re-echoes from the Berkshire shore:
Lo, Willowbrook her wonted willow wears,
The tar of Common Lane is wet with tears,
While Wotton House bewails the tutor true
Who knew all boys and cared for all he knew:
Their Eton weeps: yet thanks the fate that brought her
A Todd, McDowall, Bevan, Ford and Porter !

To T. C. P.

ON HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY

February 20th, 1931.

DESCEND, descend, O Lyric Muse !
See, running rhymes escort her !
I knew that she could not refuse
To sing of Dr. Porter.

Hail, 1860 ! Happy year !
When Evolution brought a
Prodigious infant forth to bear
The honoured name of Porter.

And thou, divine Eugenics, hail !
For Science' youngest daughter
Decided it should be a male,
A future Doctor Porter.

Hail, the Headmagisterial gaff
That landed from the water
And added to the Science staff
A whale like Doctor Porter !

How little did he guess that day
That he had really bought a
Compact encyclopædia
Of knowledge, bound in Porter !

For on his teaching I will swear
That no one else has brought a
Diversity of gift to bear
Like those of Doctor Porter.

He draws from such a boundless store
That no one else has taught a
Division (or his colleagues) more
Than clever Doctor Porter.

So sure his touch, that fame affirms
A boy exists who caught a
Disease from only hearing germs
Described by Doctor Porter.

Hail ! let me end as I began,
Since rhymes are growing shorter—
Hail, septuagenarian !
Hail ! our perennial Porter !

G. J. C.

LINES WRITTEN IN AN ETON STUDY.

July 23rd, 1931.

HERE burn the midnight tapers
Lit by a Master Mind,
Here lie those Trial Papers
Whose marks no man may find;
But if some deem he dozes
Pillowed, perhaps, on proses,
What everybody knows is
They wish he'd not resigned.

Now, laying down his labour's
Intolerable load,
No more he'll greet his neighbours
Along the Dorney Road
With tales of woe and wonder,
Of brainless boys that blunder,
Or theologic thunder
Benignantly bestowed.

If I awaken screaming,
Quite four times out of five
I find that I've been dreaming
He's taken me a drive—
A dream whence I awaken
Bewildered, bruised, and shaken,
My name and number taken,
But (usually) alive.

So desperate a driver—
(I face the fact with pain)—
So generous a giver,
Calligraphy so plain,
A voice so bass and boomy,
So gloriously gloomy,
A heart so rarely roomy,
We shall not find again.

No Time, till Time shall end here,
His memory shall dim
Who never lost a friend here
Nor ever (quite) a limb,
So here's to Mr. Chitty,
Warm-hearted, worried, witty !
And who can choose but pity
The house that loses him ?

*Lines to a Librarian on his
Eightieth Birthday*

(Air: "The Modern Major-General.")

February 11th, 1932.

PROTAGONIST and paragon of eminent
Librarians !

Of scholars most omniscient and sternest of grammarians,
He patronises all the puerilities of Ollendorff,
And interchanges compliments with Wilamowitz-Moellendorff;

In any competition with a literary pundit he
Maintains a reputation for superior profundity,
Though doubtless his acquaintance with electoral manoeuvres is
Inferior to what (perhaps) Lord Beaverbrook's or Hoover's
is.

He reads with assiduity the *Eton College Chronicle*,
And indicates its errors with benevolence ironical;
The Potentate of Printing House, the high and mighty
Thunderer,
He often has encouraged to confess himself a blunderer;

He cons the crime statistics, both the gross and petty
 larcen-al;
 He notes the news of Lindrum and the triumphs of the
 Arsenal,
 And, hitching stars of scholarship to any sort of wagon, he
 Rewrites in elegiacs all the Column known as Agony.

There's nothing that he doesn't know: if, thinking I
 exaggerate,
 You ask him (for example) what the prehistoric badger
 ate,
 He'll demonstrate decisively it ruined its interior
 By battenning incautiously on mouldy megatheria:
 He knows the hidden history of Julian's apostasy,
 He knows the cause heretical why any bishop lost a see,
 By force of native genius and industry Titanic, a
 Completely up-to-date Encyclopædia Britannica.

His manner is pontifical and verges on austerity,
 Small collegers approach him with a feeling of temerity,
 But e'en the very smallest, when recovered from their
 panic, dote
 Upon his rich profusion both of epigram and anecdote:
 Yet he's a sense of humour that would never shock a
 curate, an
 Affection for propriety that's little short of Puritan,
 A moral sense that never would the smallest peccadillo
 brook,
 And wit without vulgarity is dominant at Willowbrook.

So though the celebration of this happy anniversary
Begins, as is appropriate, with bonfires in the Bursary,
Yet every Old Etonian in every sort of latitude
Will hail the opportunity of greeting him with gratitude:
Till Congress to her debtors an uncovenanted dollar ship,
We'll prize this incarnation of Benevolence and Scholar-
ship,
And hail the last addition to our great octogenarians,
The kindest and the best of all conceivable Librarians !

Chanson de Channon

March 24th, 1932.

WHEN Mr. Blard is late for school,
And Mr. X. is early,
When Argentine is shaved and cool,
And James's coat is curly,
When Dr. Lay forgets a note,
Or Mr. D. is a figure,
When Mr. Powell stamps a bear
By feeling with his finger,
When Bernard Shaw becomes a Dean,
And Ince a minor Canon,
We will forget how great has been
Our debt to Mr. Channon.

When Harry Marten's memory fails,
Or Molly Jones's hair curls,
When, as it is when, the Daily Mail's
Supper of a soap powder,
When Gail's cat is eating out,
As I should be spinning out,

When riot reigns beside the Clun,
Or quiet on the Shannon,
We will forget the work we've done
When up to Mr. Channon.

Till boys do Extra Works for fun,
And plead for longer Verses,
Till Mr. Beasley-Robinson
Salutes Boy Scouts with curses,
Till Socialists can trust the Bank
To boost a Brighter Era,
Till Teutons hail the rising franc
And Franks the rising lira,
Till Mr. Snow displays a reel
The Censor's put his ban on,
We'll recollect the pang we feel
At losing Mr. Channon.

Till Baldwin calls for cigarettes
And shares in silent drinking
With Lady Astor: till our debts
Show surer signs of shrinking,
Till Sergeant-Majors rule by love,
Or Mr. Crace by terror,
Till Mr. Marsden fails to prove
I'm constantly in error,
Till Bradman's average is low,
Till Lindrum fluffs a cannon,
We will remember what we owe
To Francis Granville Channon.

H. M. B.

A BALLADE OF DEPARTURE.

July 21st, 1932.

TO break each duly constituted rule,
To lie, to shuffle, to prevaricate,
To act, in short, like a forsaken fool,
To swagger into Chapel very late,
To put old waistcoat-buttons in the plate,
To think that *est* 's the proper French for "and,"
To interchange *vous avez* with *vous êtes*,
I'm sure you never learnt from Mr. Bland.

When Ministers from an inferior school
Prove false, or feeble and invertebrate,
We, perched upon our humble office stool,
Shall weep but shall not wonder at their fate:
"You never learnt," we'll say, "to concentrate:
Etonians, we'd have you understand,
Are taught by masters who can educate:
I'm sure you never learnt from Mr. Bland !"

To slack, to shirk, to mob, to foul, to cool,
To leave undone the duty that you hate,
To breed your horrid cats near Barnes his Pool
Their feline felonies to perpetrate,
To think things crooked ever can be straight,
To drop a job to which you've put your hand,
To fail consistently to pull your weight,
I'm sure you never learnt from Mr. Bland.

Prince, pitiable is that potentate
To whom, at length, his much-enduring land
Says, " Sir, you are not fit to rule the State:
I'm sure *you* never learnt from Mr. Bland !"

*Lines to the Provost on his
Seventieth Birthday*

*(We understand that the following verses were found
near Gloister Pump on August 2nd, 1932.)*

NO Provost ever guided
With more paternal eye
The Collegers confided
To his supremacy.

But Art must seek Perfection
In everything, and so, Sir,
You seek with each election
To draw your children closer.

And seventy Collegians
Will pay you, as is due,
Still more devout allegiance
Now you are seventy too.

A. W. W.

(Air: "The Groves of Blarney.")

December 17th, 1932.

THERE'S a Board of Muses that sits and chooses
For special uses some selected bard,
And (well they know it !) to find a proper poet
For certain persons is uncommon hard:
For Mr. Whitworth no bard of fit worth
In all their candidates the Board could see,
So (more's the pity !) that absurd Committee
Demand a ditty should be made by me.

"In your locality" (say they) "his quality,
His worth, his wisdom must be fully known:
Put down each virtue that may occur t'you
(Some rhymes won't hurt you) and the thing is done":
But when for counsel, like a bird for groundsel,
You've gone to somebody for twenty years,
And when you're grieving for a friend who's leaving
You're less like hunting rhymes than shedding tears.

As Master in College, sure 'tis common knowledge
For nine long years 'twas he that knew the way
To curb the crazy ones and kick the lazy ones,
To make them work and show them how to play:
In days more recent, though 'twere most indecent
To name the parties, none can doubt he's showed
To all who copied an attractive Oppidan
Some fine examples on the Dorney Road.

And now he's going, though there's none that's knowing
Where in the world he'll pitch his moving tent,
In green old Gloucestershire, or neighbouring Foster-
shire,
Or far Kilkenny (where they pay no rent):
We know we lose with him, and her that goes with him,
A thing we value: and the reason why;
And this poor poem may just serve to show him
How we, that know him, hate to say Goodbye.

A. M. McN.

(Tune: "Father O'Flynn.")

DEAR Sir, you would rightly pronounce me an ass
if I

Tried your attractive preceptors to classify,

So I will simply, the critics to pacify,

Put upon paper the things that I feel.

Well, I remember how eloquent dons

Purred, as they paced the Quadrangles of John's,

"Never did you see an abler Carthusian !

Never a nicer than Archie McNeile !"

Here's long life to you, Mr. McNeile !

Trusty and true as proverbial steel—

Semi-ascetical,

Highly athletical,

Anti-æsthetical Mr. McNeile !

Proudly we boast of our friend's versatility,

Solving all sums with a faultless facility,

Philosophising with equal ability,

Strenuous seeker for x and for why:

When he arrived, all the rest of us gazed,
Partly admiring and partly amazed,
Till a phenomenon equally dominan
't illuminated Etonian sky.¹

Here's good luck to you, Mr. McNeile,
Strenuous son of " the land o' the leal " !
Disciplinarian,
Authoritarian,
Strict Sabbatarian Archie McNeile !

Then at the games that are specially dear to him,
Pity the ball that should dare to come near to him !
Little round objects all seem like a sphere to him,
Prey for the club or the racket or toe !
Witness the days when he shone in the Field
Or when the caddie, with pride unconcealed,
Builds up a tee for him, anxious to see for him,
Where the unfortunate pellet will go !

Here's a health to you, Archie McNeile,
Eye that's unerring and wrists that are steel !
Militaristical,
Anti-papistical,
Wholly un-mystical Mr. McNeile.

¹ H. K. M. (on whom be peace !) was equally distinguished in Mathematics and Philosophy at Oxford.

Lastly, to turn to domestic economy,
While, as a husband, he keeps his autonomy,
Still if you seek for the source of his *bonhomie*

 You will discover (unless you are blind)
Mrs. McNeile, who, as everyone knows,
Carries about her, wherever she goes,
Infinite charity, decent hilarity,
 Kindness and courage and wisdom combined !

 Here's long life to you, Archie McNeile,
 Mr. and Mrs. *et toute la famille*
 Changes of latitude
 (Pardon the platitude)
 Change not our gratitude, Mr. McNeile !

*A Proper Wittie Familiar Letter
from a Universitie Man*

TO MY LONG APPROVED AND SINGULAR GOOD
FRIEND, MASTER ROBERT BIRLEY.

*(A paper read at the three-hundredth meeting of the
Ascham Society, June 19th, 1932.)*

GOOD MASTER BIRLEY,

You have set me to my old use of toying in Rymes
in that you bidde me to penne somewhat in praise of *Master
Ascham* and those learned men his fellows. The which
I have attempted the more readilie, for that I know them
to be wise and wittie men, with great aboundance and
indeede superfluitie of learning. And for that I like
Master Spenser his *Epithalamion* so exceedingly well,
I also have enured my pen somewhat in that kinde, yet
not as judging myself sufficient and hable for the task.
If there be manie faults therein, as it were a *lame Gosling*
that draweth one legge after her, I pray you pardon it of
your good wille. But in that in the manner of handling
I have in some measure wilfullie departed from the rules

of his poesie (as indeed I have added certaine explications such as that divine poet needed not to use) why a God's name may not we, as else the Greekes, have the kingdome of ourc owne Language and use it to our owne capacitie ? and if (as wise men doe affirme) there be but *Five Sisters* at *York*, yet is not seven the *Perfect Number* and thereby the dearer to the Muses and to us their poor servants ?

And so I commende me to your goodwille and to that of your good companie.

Your and their unfayned friend,

IMMERITO.

Periaschamion

The Poet Salutes the Members of the Ascham Society.

YE learned *Ushers*, which have oftentimes,
 With solemn cheer and doleful drerihed,
 Drowsed on your chairs, and heard the hourly chimes
 That minded you of home and ease and bed
 And the fast-flitting watches of the night,
 The while some woeful wight
 Essayed to read what he had barely writ,
 Adnihilating sleep in time's despight,
 And mocking wisdom with a waste of wit,
 Oblivious-seeming of the growing number
 That seek relief in slumber:

Now lay these mournful memories aside,
And eat and drink what the good Gods provide;
Forget your pupils and their painful proses,
Crown your sad brow with roses,
And of your charity forbear to chide
This my dull ditty, which will not be long;
Snore softly, comrades, till I end my song.

*The Dawn arriving finds G. J. C. already Awake, and
Working at his Division Order.*

The busy *Dawn*, the messenger of *Day*,
Whose punctual praises idle bards acclaim,
To *Eton* took her all too early way
And blushed for very sorrow as she came,
Grieving that she must call to work again
The weary sons of men,
The toilworn tutor and his drowsy dame:
O'er *Slough* she past, and hasting from the East
She saw the light in *Cotton Hall* ablaze,
Where many an hour ago, a painful priest
Pored o'er the chronicle of bygone days,
If haply he the horoscope might cast
(Due this long se'nnight past)
Of those who strive his doctrine to digest,
Which youth had striven best,
And which of them were first and which were last:
Full loudly groaned he as he writ, and long;
Snore softly, comrades, till I end my song.

*The Dawn observes A. E. G. and G. W. H. on their
Morning Walk.*

Shrieking she fled, and with a backward glance
Over the meadows by the river side
She saw a wight of ruddy countenance
Who crossed the dewy sward with lordly stride,
To pay his orisons to early *Morn*,
With face as yet unshorn:
A man high-couraged, who in youthful pride
When 'mid their rocks the selvage conies ran,
But little recked of leech or life or limb,
Yet now intones the Psalms as best he can,
An holy Sacristan.
Swiftly he sped: there followed after him
Another: walking as a man in dread
That gaunt *Dyspepsia* behind him came,
Whose pincers all of flame
Full many wretches have embowelled:
These twain served *Ascham* once: yet not for long:
Snore softly, comrades, till I end my song.

*The Masters, including G. W. L. and J. F. C., are on
their Way to School.*

By this, the busy throng comes treading forth,
Some learning high to give and some to gain;
Fond foolish boys and men of weight and worth
From storied cloister and from *Common Lane*,
Men sacred, men profane.
Say, who is this who treads the shudd'ring earth,

The Secretary's badge long time he bore,
But bears it now no more;
Read well his records, for they are not long;
Snore softly, comrades, till I end my song.

Clio awakens the Vice-Provost.

But see ! the *Muse of History* descends
Her best-loved votary from sleep to rouse !
Herself his sleep and waking she attends,
Nor that high task to lesser hands allows
To touch those hallowed brows—
Whether some doubtful doctrine he defends,
While the discipled herd his chamber throngs,
Or in the *Temple* tunes his untaught songs,
Or when he chides the hound that roams at will
Nor heeds his whistle shrill,
She lingers constant by her darling's side,
And fills with teeming thoughts his busy brain
And fancies that, with shrewd legierdemaine,
He turns to verities most surely tryde,
With tongue that trips and with his often-smiling
His hearers hearts beguiling,
Till Truth be proven false and Right be wrong;
Snore softly, comrades, till I end my song.

The Nine Muses wait till the Provost is ready to rise.

To the high precincts of *Election Hall*,
Her task accomplished, *Clio* hies her straight,
Where day by day, with service punctual,
That goodly companie, her sisters eight,

Upon her coming wait.
 Not theirs importunity to tread the bower,
 Not theirs to violate the sleep august
 That laps the Good and Just:
 Here morn by morn, for many a drowsy hour,
 Fair *Polyhymnia* with *Euterpe* vies
 Which may present the gift of greater worth;
Thalia grants the grace of timely mirth,
 None save *Terpsichore* her boon envies,
 But all their daily offering devise,
 Till that great *Protes*, Lord of all this place,
 Show forth his morning face:
 Thus wait they: and they oft have waited long:
 Snore softly, comrades, till I end my song.

The Muses greet the Librarian and E. L. P.

Their vigil over, the melodious *Nine*
 Must tarry till *Librarian* appears,
 Their common chaplet round his head to twine;
 Slow is his coming, for the weight he bears
 Of learning and of years:
 He, poised oft on some *Siege Perilous*,
 In *Ascham's* service hath outwatched the days,
 A man to error full dispiteous,
 But apt to lend to foolish fond essays
 A generous meed of praise.
 With awe the *Muses* on his learning look,
 Nor smile they not upon his fellow too,

Who guards the Marches of our *Willow Brook*,
 Of stature slight, yet for his derring-do
 Renowned, whose modest brows are clustered thick
 With wreaths from *Eton Wick*.
 Thes twain have *Ascham* served both late and long;
 Snore softly, comrades, till I end my song.

*The Poet welcomes a Vice-Chancellor, an Archdeacon,
 and two Deans.*

Enough: but can my painful pen refuse
 To far-disparted friends her dues to pay,
 Who hither journey, as good comrades use,
 To share the honours of our festal day ?
 From lands where far away,
 Mindful of *Magdalene*, the adoring *Cam*
 Washes the feet of *Ram* ;
 Or where by *Severn* stands the hermit cell;
 Or where by *Ouse* another loves to dwell
 Who, though to *Lazarus* it was not given
 To preach in hell what he had heard in heaven,
 Taught on a Hill what he in plains had learned,
 And now again has turned
 To kindlier plains beneath the Sisters seven;
 Or where the sanguine choirs for ever sing
 Before the throne of *Inge*;
 Donne, DInge they sing, and sometimes sing Ding
 Dong;
 Snore softly, comrades, till I end my song.

*The Poet welcomes the Guests in General, and in Particular
A. M. G., M. D. H., and G. E. M.*

Hail, friend, sweet airs now striving to concent
With the melodious lulling of thy lyre,
Now with rough hands and griesly graplement
Wall-should'ring, dressed in ragged, rude attyre,
Of felnesse full and yre;
Hail, yoeman farmer from a *Western* shire
But late dismounted from the horrid back
Of some prodigious *yak*;
Thrice welcome thou, upon whose name attend
The mellow glories of a greater age,
Of singer, saint, and sage;
But never would this wearie song have end
And lend you leave to come unto your rest,
Were I to tell the name of every friend
And speak a welcome to each gentle guest:
For surely sleep is best,
And none that ever lived has slept too long;
Snore loudly, comrades, I have done my song.

LEVIORA

Lord's, 1928

LORD'S—Lord's on Wednesday evening !
Cambridge fieldsmen crowding round,
Oxford's hardly a chance of saving it—
Hardly a chance, but still you found
Elderly cricketers gnawing their sticks,
Blameless Bishops, forgetful of Jix,
Publicly praying at half-past six,
And prayers and curses arise from the Mound
On that head of carrots (or possibly gold)
With a watchful eye on each ball that's bowled—
And a deadly silence around the ground.

Lord's—Lord's on Friday evening !
Two men out and an hour to play—
Lose another, and that's the end of it,
Why not call it a harrowing day ?
Harrow's lips are at last on the cup,
Harrow's tail unmistakably up,
And Eton ? Eton can only pray
For a captain's heart in a captain's breast,
And some decent batting among the rest,
And sit and shiver and hope for the best—
If those two fellows can only stay !

Stay they did—can we ever forget it?—

Till those who had bidden us all despair

Lit their pipes with a new assurance,

Toyed instead with the word “declare”:

Harrow's glorious hours begin,

Harrow batsmen hurrying in,

One and all with the will to win,

Cheers and counter-cheers rend the air !

Harrow's down with her colours flying,

Great in doing and great in dying,

Eton's home with a head to spare !

Ashes of an Ancient Controversy

(In old days at Eton non-classical house-masters were referred to as Dames. At the beginning of the century a heated controversy raged round this and kindred topics. These lines may interest a few survivors of the war, and show later generations the blessings of peace.)

IF I were Classic Tutor
And you my patron Dame,
However I might treat you,
Blame, execrate or cheat you,
I think I'd prove astuter
Than use that hated name,
If I were Classic Tutor,
And you my patron Dame.

If we were Junior Masters
And you a Senior man
You'd honour us with queries
In soft seductive series
Like children with their pastors
Or patient Sister Ann,
If we were Junior Masters
And you a Senior Man.

If we were humble people
And you were A. A. S.
We'd answer you discreetly,
Decisively but sweetly,
"The floor shall top the steeple
Ere we will answer Yes,"
"Though we be humble people
And you be A. A. S."

If you were skilled in History
And I were skilled in Heat,
Or German, French or Statics
Or forms of Mathematics,
We'd meet in nightly mystery
And publish many a sheet,
If you were skilled in History
And I expert in Heat.

If you were I, my brother,
And I could but be you,
How easy we should find it
To wish we hadn't signed it
And feel for one another
And see the point of view,
If you were I, my brother,
And I (forgive me) you !

A Wedding D  marche

[With apologies to Don John of Austria, to the author of Lepanto, and to Mr. Lyttelton (who had gone to a wedding).]

COLD sun shining on the grey School Yard,
On the red and yellow buses, on a road new tarred,
And it shines on Captain Baker as he's lying in his bed,
And it gilds his tall grey bedposts till they gleam like
 lumps of lead;
And the swans of Barnes are swimming on his cold black pool,
And the Captain of the Oppidans is on his way to School.
Deep sobs bursting up and down Keate's Lane
For a well-known figure that we may not see again.
Sad sighs sounding from a big black pram
For the Hon. George Lyttelton has gone to Babraham.
Strong men weeping as the taxi ticks
To the foul and yellow station built of foul and yellow bricks:
Short sharp whistles which the locomotives blow,
Green flags waving as the guard bids Go:
The Hon. George laughing in his tall top hat
And his old old ulster and his new new spat:
For passing Hayes and Harlington,
And pausing not at Paddington,
The Hon. George Lyttelton
Has got as far as that.

*To H.E. the High Commissioner
of Egypt*

(Without a Christmas present.)

HIGHLY (and rightly) Exalted Commissioner !
Star of the West, to the Orient lent !
Listen, I pray, to the humble petition a
Poor poetaster presumes to present.

Think of the strain on the brain of the visitor
Wondering what he can offer His Ex: !
Something prosaic and practical is it ? or
Something of beauty ? The answer is x.

Once, I remember, your singular quality
Led to a wholly unparalleled act,
'Twould be indecent for me to extol it: I
Limit myself to recording the fact:

You, I repeat (and emotional gratitude
Clings to a kindness, however remote),
Taking a barely believable attitude,
Said you were tickled with something I wrote:

Therefore will I, an invincible optimist,
 Wholly regardless of possible pain,
 Say (as the Arab remarked of the Copt he missed),
 "That is the stuff I must give him again" !

So, when I go where the grey skies that foster us
 Wholly prevent us from seeing the sun,
 I shall despatch you a story preposterous:
 This is the way the inscription will run—

"Where by the Thames his contemptible hovel lists
 (Propped by the Bursar) and nature is vile,
 Sad and in sackcloth the meanest of novelists
 Sits 'mid his scholars, and sighs for the Nile:

"Others may prattle of hosts and hostesses
 Whose hospitality they have enjoyed,
 Yet the supreme satisfactory boast is his,
You HAVEN'T STAYED WITH THE FAMILY LLOYD !"

CAIRO,
Christmas, 1928.

To the Head Masters' Conference

AN APOLOGY FOR A WELCOME.

(The H.M.C. met at Eton in December, 1929, when the floods were at their height.)

HAIL to the Conference Head Magisterial !
Hail to Head Masters, the pets of the Press ! -
Slandered in snippets or mocked in a serial,
Swift in reaction and slow to progress !

Hail, the intrepid Head Master of Charterhouse !
Hail to the band he has gallantly led,
Loyally leaving full many a smarter house,
Booked for a board that is barely a bed !

Hark how uneasily men of long inches stir,
Cabined in couches constructed for boys,
Murmuring, " Would we were only at Winchester,
Baking in biddies, or thoking in toys !"

Hark, how with energy utterly laudable
Orators seek the appropriate word,
Pleading with eloquence apt but inaudible,
Herded in halls where they cannot be heard.

Duped by directions imperfectly legible

Here for a home you will hopefully hunt,
Traversing tracks very doubtfully dredgeable,
Housed in a hovel approached by a punt.

Truce to apologies, weak, ineffectual !

Let us, in language as plain as your food,
Say what an honour it is to collect you all
Here in the Hall of King Henry the Good !

Cynical Lines

(On a recent rapprochement, celebrating the fact that the friendly association so long enjoyed by Eton and Winchester is to be paralleled by a similar bond between Colleges at Oxford and Cambridge.)

GIN a Corpus meet a Corpus
Strolling down the High,
Gin a Magdalene kiss a Magdalen,
Why this maudlin cry ?
Lord-knows-what house has its Pothouse,
John's may mate with John's,
But none as yet has dared to try
An interchange of dons.

Cycling at Eton

(" At Eton College cycling runs have been organised as an alternative to boating."—The Times.)

June 2nd, 1932.

THE rain was falling steadily, the river rising higher,
The cricketers a-slipping and a-stumbling in the
mire,
Then spoke the kind Head Master : " Clearly something
must be done:
I think I'd better organise a little cycle run."

He hied him to the Provost and invited him to come,
But he replied that on the whole he'd rather stay at home;
He thought the kind Vice-Provost on his old velocipede
Would show the History Specialists the way to Runnymede.

" You are " (said he) " a bicyclist, and you can show
them how
To mount the sharp and steep incline that crowns the road
to Slough,

But as the lower boys are both unsteadier and fewer,
The Lower Master 'd better take them down the road
to Clewer."

* * * * *

The Press applauded lustily, the boys enjoyed the fun,
And thanked the kind Head Master for their happy cycle
run,
And all agreed to disregard some mild parental fusses
Because a dozen lower boys were killed by motor-buses.

Change

(The Envoi to an Eton Ephemeral Paper.)

July, 1932.

THE famous Heracleitus, by ejaculating πάντα ῥεῖ
Supplies this little paper with a reason for its
name,

Extorting from disciples of the philosophic Kant a wry
Grimace, by the suggestion nothing ever stays the same.

Fast fleeting fashions alter, with the taste in ties and
trouserings,

Old practices, old phrases in a decade disappear,
No more the call for Bever from the Collegger carouser
rings,
Recalling great Godolphin and his gift of bread and beer.

Who, passing by the Bursary, gives thought, however
cursory,

To photographs of Fellows that are fading on the walls ?
Forgotten, gracious heavens ! is the memory of Evanses,
Gone, gone are Catechetics and the canopies of stalls.

We cannot walk the highway, we can hardly even bike
on it,

We leave for Lord's in buses and return by aeroplane,
The Volunteers have vanished, and the helmet with a
spike on it—

In short, the snows of yester-year can never come again.

And if to old observances traditionally wed, you dis-
approve the abolition (say) of "hoisting," you will
find

You're thought to be the victim of a Sentimental Prejudice,
Forgetful of the Future, and the Onward March of
Mind.

The period grammarians delight in calling preterite
Has few to sing its praises from the moment it is past;
Each rising generation is importunate to better it,
And prove itself (if possible) more fickle than the last.

And yet I have a feeling I should *not* perhaps have said
it, or

Have made a slight exception in my picture of the
scene,

For nothing seems to alter in the habits of the Editor,
Who pines to fill the pages of his precious magazine.

The character of any boy who edits an Ephemeral
And calls for contributions that may stimulate the sale
Recalls the machinations of the trans-Atlantic schemer Al
Capone, and guarantees incarceration in a gaol.

He plies his foul profession with persistency monotonous,
Returning through the window when ejected through
the door,
Exaggerating any little claims he may have got on us,
And proves, to put it plainly, an intolerable bore.

* * * * *

I feel this little poem to be painfully inadequate
(It's your responsibility for asking me to try),
I'm like the wretched student whom a stern preceptor
bade equate
An unfamiliar x with some incalculable y .

But as, when playing Rackets, though my every second
shot is wood,
I watch my partner winning with respect and admiration,
I send my contribution to you (care of Messrs. Spottis-
woode)
In hope my co-contributors will save the situation.

The Three Sisters

(Similar experiments in this style may be seen in
"Cautionary Catches" [Basil Blackwell].)

ONCE beside the sea (ad mare)
Lived three sisters Cissie, Mary
And a third, cui nomen Anne.
James was just a vague young man,
Qui amavit, if you please,
All the lot (or omnes tres).
Now putavit se amare
Cissie, now putavit Mary.
Mary vicit (won the day);
He determined he would say
Firmly Se amare Mary,
Hoping she might answer "Care!"
But, when offering a kiss, he
By mistake said amavisse:
She replied "Your love is past
I was sure it could not last!
Novi te me amavisse,
Now I fear you care for Cissie!"
Her remarks astounded Jim,
Or conturbaverunt him:

“Cur,” thought he, or sometimes “Quare
Putat se me non amare ?
Mariam, I think I know,
Et amavi et amo,
But if she refuses me
Utra soror shall it be ?
(For a double question we
Can’t use *nonne*, *num* or *ne* :)
Utrum Cissie, if I can,
Ducere oportet ? an—”
But he got no further. Anne,
Quæ audivit (overheard)
Forte (quite by chance) the word,
Thought his last three words a statement,
And showed James what Female Hate meant.
“O Impudentissime !
Nunquam nunquam duces me.”
Contumeliose James
She upbraided (called him names):
He said eam erravisse:
She replied “Dic that to Cissie !”
James accordingly sorori
Tertiæ retailed the story:
Et rogavit sive she
Nubere volebat se.
Ululat (she gives a shriek)
“James, your Latin’s *very* weak !
Num nubam a man who makes
Tribus verbis three mistakes ?

Much I value your suggestion,
But so indirect a question
Needs subjunctive (*vellet*): I
Volo nubere tibi,
But you must *rogare an—*”
James, that much bewildered man,
Said: “ I wish to make it plain
I will *not* ask Anne again.”
Cissie, who had *cor benignum*,
Credidit her suitor *dignum*
Qui se duceret uxorem,
And explained his last *errorem*.
So he duxit her as wife
And they lived a happy life:
Hæc grammaticam docebat,
Ille gratias agebat,
Often meditating “ *quare*
Visus sum amare Mary?
It is obvious me Cissie
Really *semper amavisse*:
Cissie me I very sure am
Semper esse amaturam:
If at first I’d used the present
Life would not be near so pleasant,
But the perfect, now I see,
Won the Perfect Wife for me.”

The Curriculum

(Air: "The Heavy Dragoon.")

IF you want a receipt for that popular mystery
Known to the world as the *Curriculum*,
Take Latin, and Science, French, German and History,
Set them all down as the terms of a sum:
Driver's Divinity, German geography,
Rules for the use of indefinite *äü*:
Music, Mechanics and pure Palæography,
Topical talks on the growth of Japan:
Happy half-hours with the early crustacean,
Learned discussions of metres Horatian,
Physical drill for the weedy and weak,
Eton for ever and German for Greek !

Yes, yes, yes, yes !

Take of these subjects as much as is teachable,
Labour at all with a zeal unimpeachable,
Cancel them out, and the residuum
Gives an idea of the *Curriculum* !

Next, if you wish for a further variety,
Summon the aid of the halfpenny press,
Ask the opinion of London society,
Call on the parent to ban or to bless:

Pedants will prove they have flourished in spite of it,

Treating of How to Succeed at the Bar,
Learned professors will mournfully write of it

“ Classics have made us the things that we are ”:

Journalists seeking the semi-sensational

Prove to be experts on things educational,

Marie Corelli will burst into song,

William of Germany wires “ You are wrong.”

Yes, yes, yes, yes !

Pick of your problems the simple and soluble,

Blindly invite the advice of the voluble,

When you are deaf and the talkers are dumb

You will arrive at the *Curriculum* !

Songs for the Times (I)

(Air: "Sweet and Low.")

(Harold Peake, the Captain of the Boats, and Harry Low, the Keeper of the Field, presided in these dark days over the athletic destinies of Eton.)

February 14th, 1918.

PEAKE and Low, Peake and Low,
Have you a game for me ?

No, no ! these must go,

Games should have ceased to be !

Over to Mesopotamia go,

Borrow your tutor's spade and hoe,

Let the reporters see

How your lower boys, how your upper boys, dig !

Meat gets less, wheat gets less,

Plant your potatoes soon !

Meet, meet, the meat distress,

Plant your potatoes soon !

Though the ground's in a terrible mess

Plant your potatoes nevertheless,

Plant them this afternoon !

Make your lower boys, make your upper boys, dig !

Songs for the Times (2)

(Air: "The Wearing of the Green.")

February 28th, 1918.

O CAN you hear without a tear the rumour that
reports
That Lubbock's are forbid by law to wear their special
shorts?

That Heygate's theirs no more may keep nor wear them
from to-day,

For there's a cruel law forbidding everything but grey?

I met with Alexander, that serene sagacious lad,

And I said, "How's poor old Brocklebank, and how is
poor Scott Chad?"

"We're the most contented company that ever yet was
seen—

We're changing (by permission) to a special shade of green!

"O if the colour we must wear was universal grey,

Sure, Eton's sons would soon forget the heroes of to-day;

You may take the black from Heygate's shorts, the brown
from Mr. Dobbs,

But we'll not fawn nor crouch like them, nor lick the hand
that robs:

Ode on a German Gun

(The War Office presented a German Trench Mortar to Eton in token of gratitude for its activities during the war.)

March 20th, 1919.

THOU still unrivalled piece of stinginess,
Thou foster-child of Wisdom and Whitehall,
German trench-mortar, who canst thus express
A nation's thanks to those who fight and fall,
What lying legend haunts about thy shape
Of Rawlinson or Cavan, or of both,
In Flanders or the vales of Picardy ?
What office boy sent thee ? What maiden loth ?
What mad buffoon ? What sanctified red tape ?
What pipe-clayed imbecile ? What idiocy ?

Sought presents may be strange, but those unsought
Are stranger; therefore wheel the mortar on !
Not to the sensual eye, but to the thought
It indicates the true official tone:

Old gun beneath the trees, thou need'st not grieve
For long, for we can hardly leave it there,
Third-formers, never, never will the bliss
Of climbing it be yours: what we receive
We should be thankful for, no doubt: but this
Is too absurd to be entirely fair !

O fatuous shape for gratitude ! a breed
Of hard-worked men and maidens overwrought
With four years working at uncommon speed,
Whose piles of Forms have teased them out of thought,
Has these infirmities. How natural !
When old age shall this generation waste
Thou shalt remain, 'mid others better bred
Than we, the friend of boys, to whom thou say'st
"Officials are officials"—that is all
We have to say, and all that need be said.

"The Statues and the Busts"

(A few lines from the bust of Mr. Praed to that of Mr. Canning on the subject of the Eton War Memorial.)

1921.

SCHOOL Library, 1st of December.

The smaller the scale of a war
The harder it is to remember,
The less is recalled by the more.
Whatever the Council is planning
In hope to embellish the school,
I hope you will urge it, dear Canning,
To keep the Etonian rule.

The stranger discovers at Eton
No trace of her eminent son,
The hero who never was beaten,
Who never abandoned a gun.
South Africa's deeds are rewarded
In very conspicuous ways,
But Waterloo sleeps unrecorded—
Save only by Wellington's phrase.

Till Winchester raise revolutions
And Harrow abandon her Hill,
Let Eton, of all institutions,
Be true to her principles still.
I trust any Meeting that *you're* at
The obvious fact will recall,
De maximis Eton non curat,
It's best to build nothing at all.

Aristophanes

AS GILBERT MIGHT HAVE SEEN HIM.

IF you want a receipt to construct Aristophanes,
King without question of Comedy's Kings,
You should think of a sausage that's made (as it
often is)

Out of a singular number of things;
Ramsay MacDonald's delight in a pacifist,
Duke of Northumberland's loathing for mobs,
Poincaré's logic (apart from his massy fist),
Maxse's impatience to pillory jobs:
Browning's delight in a rhythmic experiment,
Baldwin's devotion to pigs in a sty,
Johnson's aversion for clerical merriment,
Jeers of Jack Jones at a Land that is dry:
Stout Evangelical loathing for Popery,
Harcourt's abhorrence of mitre and cope-ry,
Drunken debauchery, gross impropriety,
Mixed with a simple and serious piety,
Milton's astonishing metrical gift,
Something of Shakespeare, a little of Swift—

Yes, yes, yes, yes,
Borrow from each of them much of the best of them,
Adding (I fear me) a spice of the rest of them,
And I believe you may dare to expect
Rather an Aristophanic effect !

The Peach and the Pear and the Plum

ON the kitchen table side by side
Lay a peach and a plum and a pear,
And a greedy little boy with a pardonable joy
Beheld them lying there:
And when he had eaten them all he sighed
(For the time went quickly past),
And this was his word as he gobbled up the third—
“ I like each better than the last.”

And the haughty peach he proudly cried
(For the good little pear was dumb):
“ He has chosen me the first and has branded you worst,”
Thus he mocked at the modest plum:
And he swelled inside in his boastful pride,
But the plum cried: “ Not so fast !
For the words that he said keep ringing in my head:
‘ I like each better than the last.’

“ For the order in which he made his meal
Was the peach and the pear and the plum;
I’m the latest of the three and as happy as could be,
For I know my reward has come !

And I can't conceal the pride I feel,
Though my earthly days are past,
For the latest word I remember to have heard
Was ' I like each better than the last.' "

Now if you attend to the tale, my friend,
Of the pear and the plum and the peach,
Each is better than the last is the same in the end
As the last is better than each !

A Song of Education

THERE lived a boy, a blameless boy,
His father's pride, his mother's joy,
His impulses were as good as gold,
His passions carefully controlled;
Until one day alas ! alas !

notice board " Keep off the grass "

Attracted his attention.
And from that day, that luckless day,
Things went a very different way—
He crossed the grass, he stole the plums,
He bit his nails, he sucked his thumbs,
He screamed at inconvenient times,
And perpetrated other crimes
Too numerous to mention.

There lived a girl, a blameless girl,
Who shunned temptation's dizzy whirl,
Untainted by the smallest vice,
A girl emphatically nice,
Till roused one day, ah, hapless fate !
By one small placard " Shut the gate "
To blind unreasoning fury.

And from that day, ah, wretched day !
Things went a very different way :
She opened every gate she met,
She never changed her clothes when wet,
And left at last for distant climes,
Convicted of a thousand crimes
Before a British jury.

There lived a baby, blessed child,
With manners innocent and mild,
It lay and smiled and cut its teeth,
Nor once betrayed the fires beneath :
Till, contrary to use and wont,
Its nurse ejaculated " Don't "—
It swallowed down its coral l
This principle at once explains
Why men pull cords in railway-trains,
Why boys smoke cigarettes at nine,
And love to cross a railway line;
Why motor drivers, as a rule,
Drive fastest near an infant school—
And who can doubt the moral ?

That human nature stays the same,
However puritans may blame
And pedagogues may rue it;
And this remains profoundly true,
When anything's forbidden, you
Begin to want to do it !

Summer Time

SUMMER time! how precious
Of that precious season must
Summer time be to me! that extension
Of the day's appointed span!
In the first I see late hours,
Mock the clock's aching feet,
Keep the sun and moon and stars
Kindly, kindly Summer time!
What if my tired Aurora
Feels agitated, the knowers of it all!
What if farmers quail before a
Sudden milk-reformer's call?
Boys have longer time for cricket,
Bring the bat and pitch the wicket!
Hail, discovery of lunacy,
Blessed, blessed Summer time!
Yet we own with deep revulsion
There are laws too high for thee;
Nothing short of strong compulsion
Stops a clock from striking three:
See the minutes, faster, faster,
Bring despair, and bring disaster!
See the clock's long finger climb!
Cruel, cruel, Summer time!

The Plumber's Love Song

THERE'S a train that's running slowly
On a well-known line,
And in epithets unholy
Travellers combine;
O world unjust ! how can it know
The reason why it lingers so ?
Restrain your imprecations, O !
It loves the little stations, O,
And that is why it lingers so !
There's a pitch that's slowly drying
On a famous ground,
And its nature sun-defying
Cricketers confound;
O world unjust ! how can it know
The reason why it dries so slow ?
Beware of hasty thinking, O !
It loves the rain it's drinking, O,
And that is why it dries so slow !
There's a clock that's always losing,
And the household mocks,
Everlastingly abusing
Laziness of clocks;

O world unjust ! how can it be
The rest of why it goes on ?
The critics are but some, O !
It lives each hour that passes O,
And that is why it goes on !

A Song of True Love

AS I was two when you were born,
I thought of you, I own, with scorn,
A useless, toothless, foolish thing
Unfit to talk or laugh or sing:
When I was four and you were two
I still thought smallish beer of you:
But think not of me with unkindness
Because my eyes were held with blindness,
Who cares what lovers' hearts may do
When they are nought or four or two?

When I was six and you were four
I liked you, dear, a little more;
In every little game we played
I took the lead and you obeyed;
When I was eight and you were six
I took the halfpence, you the kicks:
But think not of me as ungallant
If I repressed your rising talent,
For lovers' hearts play curious tricks
When they are eight or four or six.

An Irresponsible Song

THAT physicians were untruthful I observed when
I was youthful,
For they made a diagnosis of my brain,
And reported very often that it certainly would soften,
If exposed to any unexpected strain;
Now I do not mind confessing that the prospect was
depressing,
But, as cheerfulness can hardly be a crime,
I decided I would use it in the hope that, should I lose it,
I should certainly recover it in time.

Though a steady rise in prices and an economic crisis
May have played the very dickens with our trade,
Though you hear the people mutter that their daily bread
and butter
Runs away with all the salary they're paid;
Though economists have said it is the end of British
credit,
Yet I fancy (with philosophy sublime)
Though the prospect (say) of cotton for the moment may
be rotten
We shall certainly recover it in time !

GRAVIOIRA

All Saints' Day

SAINTS remembered, saints victorious,
Saints forgotten, shamed, inglorious,
All through whom the light divine
Shone of old and still doth shine,
All unworthy though I be,
Seal me of your company !

Light that flashed through Paul to splendour,
Light through Francis glowing tender,
Light that never beats in vain,
Save on stubborn heart and brain,
Clouded though the window be,
Shine on other men through me !

The Cry of the Stones

(And He answered and said, I tell you that, if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.—St. Luke xix. 40.)

April, 1931.

GREAT grey city, in the moonlight cold,
Grey walls sleeping, where the gate gleams gold !
There is silence in the Temple, where all the busy day
The money changers take their toll before God's people
pray ;

There is silence in the city, nor, till daylight dawns anew,
Will the Jew despise the Gentile, or the Gentile scorn the
Jew ;

And Caiaphas in sleep forgets to count his Temple gain,
And sleep has stilled the busyness of aged Annas' brain ;
And Pilate in his palace lies dreaming dreams of home,
And purple pomp and pleasures and the pageantry of Rome.

They lie dreaming, but can we forget,
We little stones that pave the road that winds from Olivet,
Branches broken and the garments spread
Before Him on the roadway where His ass might tread ?
Crowds acclaiming Him with one accord,

Prince or Prophet or a King restored ?

“ Hosanna, this is He !

Hail, King of Galilee !

Blessed He that cometh in the name of the Lord !”

Sleep on, Peter, for thou canst not know

Of hearts that shall be broken when the cock shall crow ;

Dream on, Judas,—does thou dream of gold

Money bags and silver and a Master sold ?

Soon, ah, soon, in the house that Herod built,

Thou’lt cast the thirty pieces down, the guerdon of thy
guilt !

Sleep, poor Pilate, for the hours fly fast,

Soon all the washing of thy hands shall wash not out the
past ;

Dream, doomed city : for there stands no stone,

No stone upon another that shall not be overthrown ;

Sleep, sad city : but awake are we,

We little stones upon the road that winds from Bethany.

O false and foolish Pharisees to still the people’s shout,

The very stones beneath your feet, He told you, shall cry out ;

There are stones upon the cruel road that leads to Calvary,

There are stones beneath the cypresses in dark Geth-
semane ;

They too shall have their tale to tell : their hour is not yet :

But shout, ye stones upon the road that winds from Olivet !

Hail, King of David’s line !

Hail, Prophet, Man divine !

The stones that Thou hast trodden, they can not forget.

A Psalm of Thanksgiving

ON HIS MAJESTY'S RECOVERY FROM ILLNESS.

Psalm xxi.

LIFT up your hearts, lift up your thankful voices,
Ye people all, of high or low estate !
For in Thy strength, O Lord, the King rejoices,
In Thy salvation is his honour great.

In Thee we hoped, though long Thy promise tarried,
Rejoice, ye English hills, on every side !
For in Thy mercy we have not miscarried,
And Thou our lips' request hast not denied.

Glory and worship hast Thou laid upon him,
All earthly crowns and honours far above,
A land rejoicing in the mercy shown him,
That last felicity, his people's love.

And now from heaven, Thy holy habitation,
Accept the praises which Thy servants bring,
Exceeding glad today in Thy salvation,
That in Thy mercy Thou hast saved the King !

A Hymn

LORD of Beauty, Thine the splendour
Shown in earth and sky and sea,
Burning sun and moonlight tender,
Hill and river, flower and tree:
Lest we fail our praise to render,
Touch our eyes that we may see !

Lord of Wisdom, Whom obeying
Mighty waters ebb and flow,
While unhasting, undelaying,
Planets on their courses go;
In Thy laws Thyself displaying,
Teach our minds Thy Truth to know !

Lord of Life, alone sustaining
All below and all above,
Lord of Love, by Whose ordaining
Sun and stars sublimely move:
In our earthly spirits reigning,
Lift our hearts that we may love !

Lord of Beauty, bid us own Thee,
Lord of Truth, our footsteps guide,
Till, as Love our hearts enthrone Thee,
And, with vision purified,
Lord of All when all have known Thee,
Thou in all art glorified !

A Christmas Hymn

(Tune: "Marching"—Martin Shaw.)

SAVIOUR, ere the world has crowned Thee,
Cruel thorns Thy diadem,
Hail, as first Thy shepherds found Thee !
Hail, Thou Babe of Bethlehem !

Born in weakness, ere before Thee
Eastern lords their homage bring,
In Thy weakness we adore Thee,
Hail the world's Almighty King !

Far and wide to every nation
From that silent manger throne
Rings the royal proclamation
Love is strong and Love alone.

Here is Strength divine, prevailing,
Here is Power for all who seek.
Courage ! ye whose faith is failing,
Lift your hearts ! Be strong ye weak.

Master, by the Faith that made Thee
Strong to serve, to heal, to save,
Strong to die when all betrayed Thee,
Make Thy feeble followers brave.

Christ, the Lord of all good living,
Grant the gift for which we long,
Thine own love, and in the giving
Out of weakness make us strong.

A Litany

LORD of all, to whom alone
All our hearts' desires are known,
When we stand before Thy Throne,
Jesu, hear and save !

Son of man, before whose eyes
Every secret open lies,
At Thy great and last assize,
Jesu, hear and save !

Son of God, whose angel host
(Thou hast said) rejoiceth most
O'er the sinner who was lost,
Jesu, hear and save !

Saviour, who didst not condemn
Those who touched Thy garment's hem,
Mercy show to us and them—
Jesu, hear and save !

Lord, the Way to sinners shown,
Lord, the Truth by sinners known,
Love Incarnate on the throne,
Jesu, hear and save !

A Christmas Cradle Song

(Tune: 390 in the English Hymnal.)

(The third verse is taken from Dr. Watts' "Cradle Hymn.")

HUSH, my babe, lie still and slumber,
Cradled on thy mother's breast,
Holy angels without number
Crowd the air to guard thy rest.

Hark ! I hear their pinions beating !
Hark ! they sing their song again,
Oft their blest refrain repeating,
" Peace on earth, good will to men !"

Was there nothing but a manger
Sinful mortals could afford
To receive the heavenly Stranger ?
Did they thus affront their Lord ?

Blessed babe, what woes await thee,
Born to such a world as this ?
Can it be that foes will hate thee,
Friends betray thee with a kiss ?

Nay, thou bringest power unfailing
From thy Father's home above,
Power immortal, all-prevailing,
All things else can fail, but Love.

Rest, my babe, thy secret keeping—
'Tis our secret, thine and mine—
On thy mother's bosom sleeping,
God incarnate, Man divine.

Williamson's Song

(Tune: "The Londonderry Air.")

(This is the song which Williamson heard sung in the Saint's Hospital (Final Eton Fables). Experts will notice that in one line his hearing must have played him false.)

OUR eyes were blind, our selfish senses sealed,
Unseen Thy glories and Thy grace unsung,
But Thou, O Lord, with gentle hand hast healed
Our stricken sight and touched our trembling tongue.
Our hearts were hard, our ears were dull of hearing,
Thy wisest words were foolish in our eyes,
But still, O Christ, as once at Thine appearing,
The deaf can hear Thee and the dead can rise.

Our feet were slow, by worldly fetters holden,
To tread the path which Thou Thyself hast trod,
But still the lame, as at that Gate called Golden,
Can walk and leap and praise the name of God.
Then hither come, ye blind and halt and maimed,
As to His Temple came those simple men,
For those who trust in Him shall not be shamed,
Those hands shall heal you that were piercèd then !

The River's Song

I SEE them as I pass,
Fading flowers and withered grass,
And the tired leaves falling, saith the river;
But one thing standeth—the Word of God.
And this is the truth I have heard of God
That He endureth for ever.

The world may pass away,
And its pride lives but a day,
Things seen are not eternal, saith the river;
But all that cometh is still of God
And he that doeth the will of God
The same abideth for ever.

Listen once before you go
How, as centuries ago,
Still "Lift up your hearts" sings the river;
Ye shall find the Truth ye have sought in God
And all good deeds that are wrought in God
Stand fast, enduring for ever.

“Gentlemen, the Prince !”

(Air: “Men of Harlech.”)

LAND of Britain, through the ages
Home of scholars, saints and sages,
Where the fight for Freedom rages

There thy sons are found !
Many a tyrant's pride defying,
For the world her freedom buying,
They have played their part, and dying
Rest in holy ground.

Now her call sounds clearer,
Sounds to all that hear her,

“Rise again,
Ye Englishmen,
To nobler tasks and nearer !”
So in this her hour of need, her
Voice is heard of all that heed her—

“Rally round your royal Leader !

“Gentlemen, the Prince !”

Young and old, the land that bore you
Sets the mighty task before you,
See, your country's needs implore you !

Bid her sorrows end !

Each his neighbour's troubles sharing,

Each his brother's burden bearing,

Show the helpless and despairing

They have still a friend !

Britons hold together !

Stress of stormy weather

Shall ne'er divide

True comrades tied

In faithful friendship's tether.

Love can save the world from falling,

Love can break self's chains enthralling,

Hear the voice of England calling !

“Gentlemen, the Prince !”

A Song of Strength

THE strong wind blows over sea and shore
 (Strong, strong is the wind),
And the waves toss and the trees groan,
But the wild night passes: 'tis day once more,
 And the wind is gone.

The strong tower frowns magnificent
 (Strong, strong is the tower),
Founded on rock and built of stone:
But the years pass and the rocks are rent,
 And the tower is gone.

Strong are hate and fear and sin
 (Strong, strong all three),
And death, who calls this world his own:
But the world passes and all therein—
 Love stands alone.

Love rights the wrong, Love ends the song:
Love, out of weakness, make us strong!

A Song for the End of the Half

(Tune: St. Denio. English Hymnal 407.)

*(Suggested by the presentation of new colours to the O.T.C.
by H.M. the King, July, 1930.)*

MARCH off the old Colour ! Its great days are
done,

Its blazon shows duller, outworn by the sun:
Our schooldays are over: discharged from that war,
Salute—for we love her but serve her no more.

Great Power inexpressible—Love, Beauty, Truth,
Thou Father invisible, Guide of our youth !
'Tis Thou that hast cared for us, watch o'er us still:
Those good works prepared for us, grant we fulfil !

For deeds unrewarded, for fights fought alone,
Unthanked, unrecorded, imperfect, unknown,
For each faithful failing, for courage restored,
For love all prevailing, we thank Thee, O Lord.

Truths dimly discerned here God grant us to know;
For life's lessons learned here, give thanks ere we go;
March off the old Colour ! torn, faded—and yet
In the new life and fuller we shall not forget !

A Christmas Fantasy

C ROWDS close thronging, where the sun shines
down

On the narrow streets and alleys of the brown-roofed
town,

Strange crowds gathering of David's clan

From little towns and villages where Rome's writ ran:

For was it not commanded by the royal word of Rome

That men of David's lineage must come to David's home?

From little towns and villages that Cæsar never knew,

Where Cæsar's legions never trod nor Cæsar's eagles flew,

From little harbours lying low beside the southern sea,

From little upland villages in Northern Galilee,

From little towns on barren hills obedient they came,

Obedient but sad at heart nor silent in their shame:

Romans rule them, but can they forget

How once of old on David's brow the royal crown was set?

How dauntless Jews defied the doom that tyrants dared
decree?

How Judas fought the foreigner and set his people free?

We obey thee, lord of Rome,

We are here : but as we come

We dream of kingdoms that have been and kingdoms yet to be !

Thus they murmured, as those streets they trod
Nor doubted, in their dreaming, of the providence of God.
Long, aye long, do His purposes delay,
Yet beauteous o'er the mountain-tops shall dawn His
destined day :

He shall arise in vengeance to break the heavy yoke,
And lead His ransomed people forth, a freed and faithful
folk,

Our King, the Son of David, in righteousness shall reign,
Our Prince shall rule in judgment Jerusalem again.

The young see visions and the old dream dreams
Of Zion's house establishèd and Shiloh's streams.

But turning from the cruel inn that had no room for them
Two Galileans trod alone the streets of Bethlehem:

Slow their going, for her time was nigh,

Nor far the lowly stable where the Maid must lie.

What visions and what dreams are hers ! of that strange
messenger,

God's angel—and that Holy Thing that should be born of
her.

She guards his saying in her heart, the thought she may not
tell—

Ah ! God, what dreams, what hopes and fears ! the voice
of Gabriel—

"Thou shalt bring forth a son

To sit on David's throne

Son of the Highest he !

Sir, sir, how can this be ?

Behold the handmaid of the Lord ! so be it unto me !"

Sleep not, shepherds, on your mountains steep
(David was a shepherd boy and fed his father's sheep) ;
To you, poor shepherds, shall the angels sing
(David was a shepherd boy, but David was a King)
Great glad tidings of a great new joy,
Far stranger than was ever told to simple shepherd boy.
Lo ! glory shines about them—'tis the angel of the Lord—
'Tis His angel come upon them, and they hear his word:
" Christ your Saviour "—so he spake to them—
" To-day is born in David's town, a babe in Bethlehem—
And this shall be a sign to you "—(for they were sore
afraid)—
" The babe is wrapped in swaddling clothes and in a manger
laid."

And suddenly a multitude of angels in the sky
Sing peace on earth, good will to men and praise to God
most High.

The song sounds fainter and the glory dies,
And they gaze on one another with a wonder in their eyes:
" *Poor simple men are we :*

Yet let us haste to see

The little babe, the Saviour, who in a manger lies !"

A Garden Song

(Based on Romans viii. 19-23.)

BEFORE Man took to sinning,
And hearts began to harden,
We read at the beginning
The Lord God made a garden.

With every herb He planted it
(So runs the ancient story),
And then to Man He granted it
To tend it for His glory:

That each with all the rest of us,
Forbearing and forgiving,
Should make the very best of us—
And life be worth the living.

But Man, who might have shown to us
The laws of true behaviour,
Taught vices of his own to us—
And still we want a saviour.

For though we think you know the way
To make us kind and humble,
You can't be said to *show* the way—
And so we boast and grumble.

Till Man his mission owns, my friend,
All tribes of fin and feather
And every garden groans, my friend,
And travails all together.

The Song of the Match

SOME lift their eyes to the hills for help,
If thence their help may be,
And some look East and some look West,
And some look over the sea:
But we have a surer faith, my friends,
And when other hope is none
We praise the Lord and grasp the sword
And turn our face to the sun !

The sun that rises on evil and good
He cheers and blesses them all,
With flowers for pleasure and corn for food
And fruit for both on the wall:
And cousins of his are we, my friends,
With a work like his to be done,
So lift your heart and play your part
And turn your face to the sun !

Though he like a giant may run his course,
And we but stumble along,
Our share we'll take for the family's sake,
And cheer the road with a song;

For the sun will be shining still, my friends,
Long after our journey's done,
So stiffen your back and lift your pack
And turn your face to the sun !

King Henry's Building

NOW the house that King Henry set in hand
(The lion, the lily and fleur de lys)
Was the bravest church in all the land;
Yet he might not finish the work he planned—
Then he said, "As God wills, let it be—
Shall His poor servant be wiser than He?"

But a house was built that he dreamt not then
(The lion brave and the lily pure)
That has grown in glory beyond his ken,
Not of brick nor stone but in hearts of men.
Esto perpetua! May it endure!
For this foundation standeth sure!

'Tis King Henry's house that is building still
(For a sable field have the lilies three)
And the builders are all men of good will—
And King Henry's hopes his sons fulfil
When they say—Though scant our building be
Shall not our sons build better than we?

The generations may not stay,
(Yet dear, ah dear, are the lilies three)
Like leaves of the tree they pass away:
Yet, sons of Eton, take heart and say
We have seen afar what the school may be—
God grant our sons build better than we !

The Song of the Stairs in the Palace of Truth

GOD, Who knowest the things that were,
Grant us the grace to find Thee there,
Show in the world that Christ has made
Light still gaining upon the shade,
Show, by the path that Christ has trod,
Man ascending the mount of God.

God, who knowest the things that are,
Lead us to Bethlehem by Thy star,
There in the manger to us display
Thy Son, the Life, the Truth, the Way,
That we may see with childlike eyes
Truths that are hidden from the wise.

God, who knowest what yet might be,
Teach us to see ourselves in Thee;
What we might be if we but dared
To claim the Kingdom for us prepared
And hear Thine angels singing still
"Peace upon earth, to men good will."

God, who knowest what things shall be,
Love, Truth, Beauty, are one in Thee;
Truth is mighty and shall prevail,
Love and Beauty can never fail;
Grant us the grace to see fulfilled
All that Thy Wisdom and Love have willed !

The Song of the Candles

THE Sun that giveth light by day
Is God Almighty's Candle,
He lights the world the whole long way
From far Cape Horn to Baffin's Bay,
From Cork to Coromandel:
But every night we hear him say
" My brothers, since I may not stay,
I leave the law you must obey,
Burn up, each little Candle !"

The world was in a sorry plight
Till Romans thought of candles,
They could not keep their lamps alight
They groped in darkness every night
For slippers, shoes or sandals:
But we can make the darkness bright
And gloomy terrors put to flight,
For we can grant the gift of sight—
So burn up, little candles !

And when the Romans' days were done
They left the world with candles;
What matter though it be o'errun
By greedy Goth or horrid Hun

Or still more vicious Vandals ?
And one more victory was won
When Alfred taught that everyone
Can count the hours without the sun
By making use of candles !

To every man in his degree
We preach, we little candles,
Why need the pleasant world we see
For ever thus encumbered be
With stumbling blocks and scandals ?
'Tis light alone that makes men free,
And Light has shone from Galilee;
Shine then, and bid the shadows flee,
Burn up, ye little candles !

The Songs of Lupton's Tower and Upper School

MY brick that glows with tints of rose,
My vanes that catch the sun
And glitter bright with golden light
As each fair day is done;
The shadows, lingering on the tower
That Lupton built for thee,
Bid Eton's sons to learn the power
That comes to those who see.
For Beauty opens blind men's eyes
And bids the dumb man sing;
Thus day and night, in shade and light,
I do thy work, O King !

A harder task of me you ask,
For Truth is hard to find,
And those who learn that Truth is stern
May dream that she's unkind.
Yet piece by piece, as years increase,
I do thy work, O King,
And point the way to all the Truth
That wiser years may bring !

An Invocation

O SAINT, O King, when first thy people crowned thee

And set a babe upon a warrior's throne,
Thy childish eyes saw no true friends around thee
But men with looks of pride and hearts of stone.
Now they are gone—those names and titles perished
In battle loud five centuries ago,
Thy name alone in loyal hearts is cherished
And still thy glory and thine honour grow.

Look down from heaven, O Founder Saint, we pray thee
On these thy courts and this thy well-loved stream,
Behold in us, who here our homage pay thee,
The destined children of thy lonely dream:
May all who bless thy name for good gifts given
Live not unworthy him whose praise they sing;
Nor those, our elder brethren, who have striven
To serve their God, their country and their King!

The Song of School Yard

WE'VE seen them all a thousand times—so like,
but none the same,
Now loitering here for Absence, now hurrying to a
game;
We've watched them here for many a year: we know their
very tread,
We guess the things they think about: we hear the things
they've said.
And if they know not what they owe for all that Eton
made them,
Then ask the stones, the little stones, and they will all
upbraid them.

We've seen them all five years or more: what wonder
our knowing
The memories that fill their mind, now that it's time for
going?
They're thinking mostly of the friends they work or play
or mess with,
And friends perhaps of early days they shared each small
success with:

Those who forget how great their debt to those they leave
behind them

Must ask the stones, the little stones, and surely they'll
remind them.

Friends teach a man he is not made to live and die alone,
Till in their pains and pleasures he perhaps forgets his own;
For every friend is taught of God to love and serve another,
And there be friends (saith Solomon) stick closer than a
brother;

So if they count a little thing the friends that Eton gave
them,

From such a sin, thy stones, O King, thy little stones shall
save them.

Leaving Books

July, 1922.

TAKE this in token that thoughts unspoken
With chains unbroken will bind you still,
You'll first discover how much you love her
When your time's over for good or ill.
As misers measure their heaps of treasure
And count it pleasure to watch them grow,
The games you've played here, the friends you've made
here,
You must remember before you go.

Have done with grieving that, now you're leaving,
There's no retrieving a failure here,
You yet may borrow a hope from sorrow,
And face to-morrow with braver cheer.
What Eton brought you, what truth she taught you,
What good she wrought you, the years will show,
But vows you've made here and prayers you've prayed
here—
You must remember before you go.

Enough bewailing of fault and failing,
Let faith prevailing take heart and say :
“ The God who made us and lives to aid us
Has ne’er betrayed us though we betray.
Five years for sowing and now we’re going,
It’s time for showing the crop we sow,
The God who chose us and loves and knows us
Will not forget us where’er we go.”

A Song Against Time

TIME, who countest the hour that passes,
Men see darkly through thy dim glasses,
Know but little and judge but ill;
For the best of schools can be cruel places,
But God can look on our stupid faces
And, knowing the worst of us, love us still.

Constant failures and few successes,
Small ambitions that no one guesses,
Little we have to show—and yet
'Tis God rekindles the dying embers,
For God forgets what the world remembers,
And God remembers what men forget.

Though He suffer our feet to stumble,
God, who girdeth with strength the humble,
Bids us rise when we feared to fall:
For though with reason the world condemn us,
Yea, though even our heart condemn us,
God is greater and knoweth all.

The Song of the Grate

THOU that hast made us all, Paper and Coal and
Wood,

Lo, we have heard thy call; lo, we have understood.

Paper that flares and goes, Wood that crackles in flame,

Coal that abides and glows, surely their end is the same.

All that we have to give, giving we know not why,

Not for ourselves we live, and not to ourselves we die.

Not to ourselves we die, fulfilling our Lord's desire;

Coal, Wood, Paper, and I, we have made our Master's
fire.

The Song of the Fruit-Trees

(Based on a legend that fruit-trees once could speak, but lost the power through misusing it.)

GRAPE and nectarine and peach,
We have lost the gift of speech;
Silent, every kind of berry,
Silent, apricot and cherry,
Fig and apple, pear and plum,
Silent all the days to come !

Little profit 'tis to speak
When reward is all ye seek;
Little good your voice will do
When its talk is all of *you*;
Now the garden every morning
Listens to the fruit-trees' warning.

Up and work, and envy not
Each his neighbour's happier lot !
Cheerfully your task fulfil,
Each content to do His Will;
Be the best that you can be:
God hath need of every tree !

Praised be God who needeth each,
Grape and nectarine and peach,
Needeth apricot and cherry,
Needeth every kind of berry,
Fig and apple, pear and plum:
Praise Him all the days to come !

A Chapel Song

ENGLISH Oak and Norway Pine,
Wrangle not before the Shrine,
Marring thus a work Divine !

Vile and common, rich and rare,
Yet they all one service share,
Seeing all God's creatures are.

Stones that live and flowers that die,
Are they not one company,
Serving the one Lord on high ?

Brick and wood and glass and stone
Serve their God, yet not alone,
For the Lord their God is one.

So may all that day by day
Gather in this House to pray
Serve together even as they !

Polymathes' Song

(Two stone figures of Elizabethan boys, Philomathes and Polymathes, stand outside the old School at Shrewsbury.)

THERE is one great rule that is taught at school
To every Christian man;
Nay, Infidel, Heretick, Jew, and Turk
Know one commandment they may not shirk,
And that is the law that a boy must work,
If he'd be a learned man.

And the second rule that is taught at school
To every Christian man
Is to seek for truth wherever it lies,
For truth is that which makes us wise,
And truth is the light that lightens the eyes
Of every learned man.

There's a third great rule that they taught at school,
And this is the way it ran:
To fight for the things that a man loves most,
And to give his life, not counting the cost,
For a given life is a life well lost—
Saith every learned man.

These be the rules that are taught in schools
 Since first my days began;
To learn to serve ere you learn to rule,
Not to serve yourself but to serve the school:
And he that keepeth them is not a fool,
 As I am a learned man !

A Song of the Severn

FROM mountains famed in story
And upland vales I flow,
And gather grace and glory
With every league I go,
But I, who flow for ever,
Am still the same great river.

Through gloomy days and merry,
Through hours of sun and rain,
By bridge and ford and ferry
I pass, yet still remain:
Though all may change, the river
Flows on, the same for ever.

And you whose days are done here,
Take heart of grace and say,
“ Things faithfully begun here
Pass not with us away ”;
Then make an end of grieving
There’s no such thing as leaving !

And as my sons and daughters,
In mist and cloud and rain,
From ocean's mighty waters
Return to me again,
The dead you mourn for go not,
But live in ways you know not.

Though here their days be over,
From worlds beyond our ken
Their homing spirits hover
Round Shrewsbury again,
Brave spirits, unregretful,
Remembered, nor forgetful.

All who for Right have striven
And all who died to save
Have found the gift they'd given
And saved the life they gave:
Then make an end of sighing,
For such there is no dying !

Lines Beneath a Crucifix

HERE is the Faith that wise men dimly groped for,
The evidence of things as yet unseen,
The full assurance of the tidings hoped for
That what Christ is God has for ever been.

Here is the Hope that shone afar to guide them,
Prophets and kings—although their eyes were blind,
Yet they desired to see the light denied them:
Here is fulfilled the Hope of all mankind.

Here is the Love that saints and sinners sighed for—
Paul in his prison, David on his throne—
The Love that will not fail the souls He died for,
But claims the very outcast for His own.

A Hymn of Praise

PRAISE, praise, O world, the God of love,
Praise Him, ye sun and moon above,
Praise Him, all creatures upon earth,
Praise Him, ye things of little worth.

But most of all, ye sons of men,
Who come and go and come again,
Teach ye these walls to sound His praise,
And serve and love Him all your days.

The Birds' Song

(A hymn for Easter Eve.)

SING, brothers, sing, and praise your King !
Gone is the night of sorrow !
Have ye not heard His royal word,
“ God careth for the sparrow ” ?
Our watch we kept while others slept,
We saw where Joseph laid Him,
Saw women bring their offering,
The last sad tribute paid Him.
But now from us they'll borrow
Songs for a joyful morrow !

For we have heard a greater word,
And seen a greater glory;
Sing, brothers, sing this fair morning,
And tell the world the story !
We heard a voice that bade rejoice,
Where late our Lord was lying,
No more, it saith, shall there be Death,
Sorrow, nor pain nor crying !
And men from birds may borrow
Songs for a glad to-morrow !

The Song of King Henry

HENRY THE SIXTH was a tiny boy
When a royal crown on his brow was set,
And they told him: " This is king's employ
Crowns to keep, and crowns to get."

Of heavy gold was King Henry's crown,
The gold for which men scheme and strive;
Glad, glad did he lay it down,
For they longed to get and he to give.

Henry the King let build a school,
Floruit, floreat, floret.
And he gave his scholars a simple rule:
" Be it yours to give; let others get.

" Get who may, but give who can !
Floruit, Floret, Floreat.
There's nought may be got by a Christian man
Save only the Cross his Saviour gat.

“ ‘ More blessed to give than to receive,’
Would but my scholars remember it !
Let others get: be it yours to give,
Floreat, floret, floruit.”

King Henry's dead this many a day,
But still his name and his lesson live
When sons of Eton take heart and say,
“ Nought's truly gotten but that you give.”

The Hymn of Eton Chapel

YE priests who here at altars seven
Did service to the God of heaven,
Sing His praises, Alleluia !
And ye who deemed their worship sin
With them His worship here begin,
Alleluia !

Ye, who in paint and glass and wood
Adorned His House as best ye could,
Sing His praises, Alleluia !
Sing ye, whose names, for service done,
Are graven here in brass and stone,
Alleluia !

Ye townsfolk who, in days of yore,
Our service shared, with us once more
Sing His praises, Alleluia !
Loud organs in His Name rejoice,
With shawm and trumpet, verse and voice,
Alleluia !

O God, who here hast set Thy Name,

O God, from age to age the same,

Alleluia, Alleluia !

On all who pray towards this place

Show forth the brightness of Thy Face,

Alleluia !

A Hymn for the End of the Half

LORD, Thou hast brought us to our journey's end:
Once more to Thee our evening prayers ascend:
Once more we stand to praise Thee for the past;
Grant prayer and praise be honest at the last !

For all the joys which Thou hast deigned to share,
For all the pains which Thou hast helped to bear,
For all our friends, in life and death the same,
We thank Thee, Lord, and praise Thy glorious name.

If from Thy paths, by chastening undismayed,
If, for Thy gifts ungrateful, we have strayed,
If in Thy house our prayers were faint and few,
Forgive, O Lord, and build our hearts anew.

If we have learnt to feel our neighbour's need,
To fight for truth in thought and word and deed,
If these be lessons which the years have taught,
Then stablish, Lord, what Thou in us hast wrought.

So be our rest Thy palaces most fair,
Not built with hands, whose stones Thy praise declare:
Where war is not, and all Thy sons are free,
Where Thou art known, and all is known in Thee !

Founder's Day, 1921

(Tune: "Darwall's 148th.")

(Hymn written for the 500th Anniversary of the birth of King Henry VIth.)

YE holy saints of yore,
Who wore an earthly crown,
And now, God's throne before,
Have cast your glories down,
Teach us to sing
As best we may
On this his day,
Our Founder King !

Ye humble men of heart,
Who lived to praise your Lord,
And bear to-day your part
In Heaven's all-blest accord,
His praise acclaim,
Whose deeds have brought,
By him unsought,
A deathless fame !

Ye mourners, who on high
Lift up your joyful head,
Your tears for ever dry,
Your sorrows comforted,
Praise him who trod
Through grief and pain
That pathway plain
That leads to God !

But chiefest, Thou, his Lord,
His praise attentive hear,
Who strove to keep Thy word
And share Thy sufferings here:
For all he willed
Be glory Thine,
His great design
In Thee fulfilled !

The School at War—1914

WE don't forget—while in this dark December
We sit in schoolrooms that you know so well,
And hear the sounds that you so well remember—
The clock, the hurrying feet, the chapel bell:
Others are sitting in the seats you sat in:
There's nothing else seems altered here—and yet
Through all of it, the same old Greek and Latin,
You know we don't forget.

We don't forget you—in the wintry weather
You man the trench or tramp the frozen snow;
We play the games we used to play together
In days of peace that seem so long ago;
But through it all, the shouting and the cheering,
Those other hosts in graver conflict met,
Those other sadder sounds your ears are hearing,
Be sure we don't forget.

And you, our brothers, who, for all our praying,
To this dear school of ours come back no more;
Who lie, our country's debt of honour paying—
And not in vain—upon the Belgian shore;

Till that great day when at the Throne in Heaven
The Books are opened and the Judgment set,
Your lives for honour and for England given
The school will not forget.

The Trust—1918

THEY trusted God—Unslumbering and unsleeping
He sees and sorrows for a world at war,
His ancient covenant securely keeping,
And these had seen His promise from afar,
That through the pain, the sorrow and the sinning,
That righteous Judge the issue should decide
Who ruleth over all from the beginning—
And in that faith they died.

They trusted England—Scarce the prayer was spoken
Ere they beheld what they had hungered for,
A mighty country with its ranks unbroken,
A city built in unity once more:
Freedom's best champion, girt for yet another
And mightier enterprise for Right defied,
A land whose children live to serve their Mother—
And in that faith they died.

And us they trusted; we the task inherit,
The unfinished task for which their lives were spent;
But leaving us a portion of their spirit,
They gave their witness and they died content.

Full well they knew they could not build without us
That better country, faint and far desired,
God's own true England; but they did not doubt us—
And in that faith they died.

Armistice Day

(Tune: "Dykes' Easter Chant.")

FOR all our friends who, near or far,
Heard and obeyed the call of war,
For deeds determined, dared, and done,
We praise Thee, Father, Spirit, Son.

From scarce-held trench and hard-won hill,
They, being dead, are speaking still.
O make us hear them as they cry,
"Not to ourselves we live or die!"

And grant that, through the grave's dark door,
Our friends and we may meet once more,
Through Christ our Lord, Himself Who gave
In life to serve, in death to save.

C. A. L.

(The Honourable Charles Lister, killed in action.)

TO have laughed and talked—wise, witty, fantastic,
feckless—

To have mocked at rules and rulers and learnt to obey,
To have led your men with a daring adored and reckless,
To have struck your blow for Freedom, the old straight
way:

To have hated the world and lived among those who
love it,

To have thought great thoughts, and lived till you
knew them true,

To have loved men more than yourself and have died to
prove it—

Yes, Charles, this is to have lived: was there more to
do?

R. L. F.

Born August 30, 1908.

Died August 29, 1924.

ONE day the Lord of all,
He without Whom there may no sparrow fall—
That Lord of quick and dead
By Whom our very hairs are numbered—
Sat in His court, and to His feet there came
The blessed angels, naming each by name
The children given to their guardian care.
It was the hour of prayer:
For, as by God's good grace
They always see His face,
So theirs it is—and not in vain—to plead
For daily mercies which their children need.

One angel came
Breathing a boy's dear name
To ask a blessing for his day, to cheer
And guard and guide him through the coming year.
And, as he came, God smiled
For love of that fair child,
And said, "What is the gift thou com'st to seek?"

I know thine errand: Speak !”
And he made answer, “ Lord, not happiness,
Nor friendship, nor success,
Nor strength of body, no, nor gifts of mind;
Nor would I ask for pleasure,
For these he now has in full boyish measure
And more of all such things will surely find.
Nor do I ask that gift all gifts above,
The gift divine of love,
For all of love a boy may know on earth
Has shed itself around him from his birth.—
Say, friends, what may I ask
Our Lord for this His child ?”

And some there were that smiled,
Some, half in envy of so light a task,
Sighed, thinking of their own:
And one by one
They told of gifts for which 'twere well to pray,
Each with the other lovingly contending
To explore the grace of God that knows no ending.
When each had said his say,
God, Who had heard,
Rose from His throne, and on His face there broke
A smile divinely tender: and He spoke.

This was the word.
“ It is enough: I had not thought so soon
To grant my latest and greatest boon—
But now, to end your strife,
I give him Life.”

Vale

Summer, 1908.

HOURS and days and the long, long summers,
Weeks and months and the shifting years,
Days of dreaming and childish pleasures,
Joys and sorrows and hopes and fears,
These are as grass that the sun hath smitten—
Hate of an enemy, love of a friend,
Over all is the sentence written,
“ I see that all things come to an end.”

Yea, but wide is the Lord's Commandment,
Wide—and the fools shall not err therein,
Not for a time or a season only
Stands it written, “ Thou shalt not sin.”
We may fail and our footsteps falter,
Yet 'tis a God that has marked our road,
His is the love no chance may alter,
And His Commandment is very broad.

If in a desolate land and weary
Goodly the heritage we have known,
If in the desert, a healing shadow,
Stand our friends as a rock of stone,

Therefore we, as the Lord ordaineth,
Pay the love that we learnt from them,
Therefore we, while our breath remaineth,
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

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